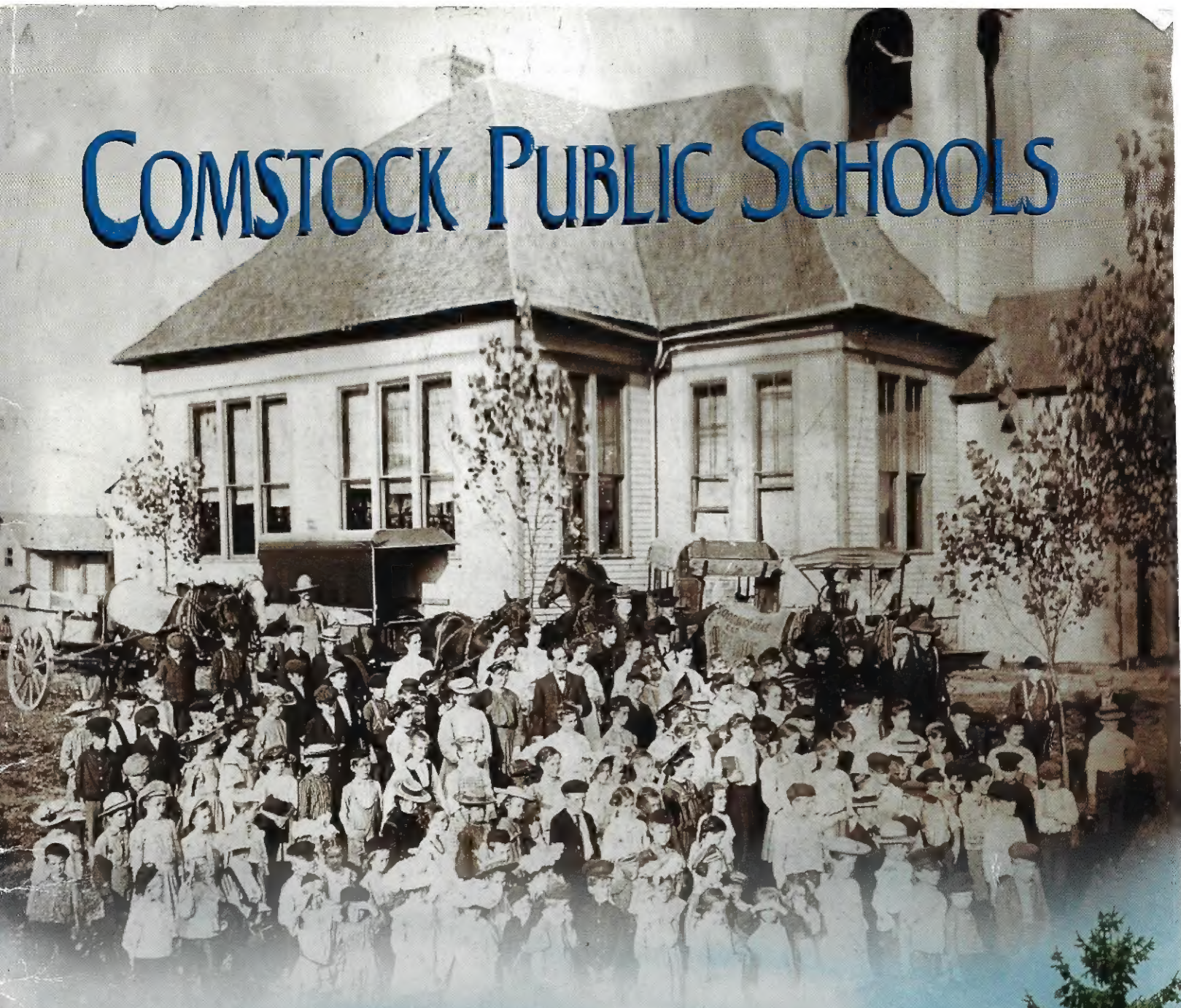


# COMSTOCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS



THERE'S NO BETTER PLACE  
TO LEARN...



# WELCOME



Superintendent, Dr. Robert Hamet

## WELCOME TO OUR PAST...

Looking at Comstock Public Schools today with its seven modern buildings and an enrollment of more than 3,000 students and a staff of about 450, it's hard to imagine that the school began in a shanty with only six students and one teacher 168 years ago. Now, in 1999, as we approach the end of the century, it's a good time to reflect back on where the

district has come from and where it's headed in the 21st century. Join us on this journey through the past...and enjoy!

## How this book came to be

Carl W. Buechner once said, "They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."

Members of the committee to develop and produce this historical perspective found this to be all too true when they looked back on more than 100 years of existence of the Comstock School District. The task brought about fond memories and humorous stories too numerous to mention. We have, however, included as many memories as possible within these pages.

Thanks, too, to all who contributed clippings, newsletters, photographs, yearbooks and wonderful recollections of the past. We couldn't have done it without you.



*Thanks to committee members (from left) back row, Chris Wenke, Carolyn (Stafford) Stevens, Diane (Sparks) Thomas, "Junior" Harland Adams, and Dr. Robert Hamet, and front row, Faye Goldner, Lucille (Taylor) Adams, Beth (Cooper) Robbins, and Beverly (Vose) Dantone for their endless hours of work collecting materials from the overwhelming contributions pictured above. Not pictured are Cynthia Lee, Fred Smith, Gene Sanford, Shirley (Vose) Palmer, Janet Corstange, Mary Hamilton, Larry Dopp, Bob Bellisle, Jack Bellisle and Jim Bell.*

## Our heartfelt thanks to...

Phyllis Rose  
Beverly Dantone  
Green Meadow  
Elementary PATS  
Michele & Jerry Sompels  
John & Sue Marietta  
Daniel Coyne  
Tom & Colleen Crabel  
Beth Robbins  
Mr. & Mrs. Dave Richards  
Bob & Carol Hamet  
Thomas & Charissa  
Oliphant  
Art & Delores Mixis  
Lucille & Harland Adams  
Everen Securities  
Landscape Forms, John  
Chipman  
Miller, Canfield, Paddock  
& Stone  
John & Phyllis Titus  
Lorence & Nancy Wenke  
Susan Doud  
Hair Care Center  
Tim & Jan Fox

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## 1831-1899

In the summer of 1831, a three-month session taught by Betsey O. Comings was the beginning of what was to eventually become Comstock Public Schools. Miss Comings had six pupils and was paid \$1 a week. She and the students met in a shanty which had originally been built as a shelter by Mr. Carpenter.

In 1833, Horace Comstock donated land on which to build the Comstock Village School. He also paid for the building of the school and, in return, he asked that the village and township be named after him. The first teacher in this building was Miss Betsy Percival, daughter of millwright and prominent citizen, Samuel Percival. This 12 x 14 x 8 building was also used as a church and town hall for many years.

Another early school near Galesburg, erected in 1834 by a work bee of settlers, was a log cabin. In the summer of 1834, Miss Jones taught 12 students in this school. The first male teacher was Ebenezer Flanders who first taught in the building in the winter of 1834 and for the next two winters. After two winters, the log building was abandoned and a frame house built to house the school.

In 1841, the township residents voted to raise \$150 to build a school

and \$18 to buy the land on which to build it. The students were to pay for their schooling by delivering a half cord of wood to the school during the first week of the school session. Those who didn't do so were charged 75 cents on their taxes.

Following a debate about whether to hire a male or female teacher, Andrew Clark was hired to

teach primary school for three months with his monthly stipend being \$18.

Eventually, there were 11 school districts within the township, with their boundaries being established by the Board of School Inspectors on May 28, 1842. By 1866, 788 students were enrolled in the 11 districts.

The second school which had been built within the village of Comstock burned down on February 4, 1898. Earlier the school had conducted its first official fire drill which helped the 70 pupils evacuate the building safely at the time of the fire. The two room building with a basement had been insured for \$1,200.



*The whole town turned out for this picture in front of the old one-story school house, which was built in 1898. A second story was added in 1907.*

Following the destruction of this school, the school board called a meeting to decide on building a new school. The voters agreed to spend no more than \$2,500 for a one-story frame building. This third school building, to which an additional story was added, was used until 1942. It had two rooms, a large hall, an office and a hot air furnace.

Two teachers, Laura Hale and a Miss Flanders, taught students up through the eighth grade. At times, a ninth grade was added, but those students wanting to continue on to high school had to go to Galesburg or to Kalamazoo. They could easily do so by paying five cents to take the interurban train and then paying 35 cents per week for tuition.



# 1900-1909

By 1906, township residents were feeling the need to provide a better educational environment for their children. Writing in 1910, A. M. Nutten, who was to become the first superintendent of the consolidated school district, said:

*"For years it had been the idea of the representative citizens that a great need of the times was a better rural social condition; that to accomplish this, more of the young must be given better preparation for life's duties, and that they should be given an education better intended to make them happy; that a potent force in the downfall of many of our young people is the early age at which so many of them leave the care of parents to get their education among strangers in the city where temptation is sometimes more than they can bear."*

The result of such concern was that the districts of Comstock, Chenery, Simmons, Maple Grove, Stowell, and Knapp were consolidated into one school district.

In the fall of 1906, this first consolidated school district in Michigan opened with 140 children, a principal and three assistants. They met in the building which had been erected in 1898 to replace the one destroyed by the fire. This site was near the geographical center of the district and

was also the site where Horace Comstock had built the first village school.

By 1908 this new district had six teachers and 189 students, eight of whom comprised the first graduating class. Members of this class were Leon Miller, Gleason Allen, Raymond Warren, Clell Peer, Phoebee Nutton, Mable (Woodhouse) Bullard, Ethel Pease, and Rose Cretsinger.

The curriculum of the consolidated district included required classes such as English, math, history and physics, and electives such as German, Latin, agricul-



*The custodial staff of Comstock Public School, from left, Fred Clark, Nettie Garrison, Charlie White and Raymond "Shorty" Rose. Shorty used to pull the rope to ring the bell that made students scurry to school at 9 a.m*

ture, domestic training and chemistry. Instruction was also provided in music, art, ethics, whittling, stenciling, weaving, basketry, freehand and mechanical drawing.

Students who lived more than three-quarters of a mile from school were transported to school in three covered wagons, each carrying about 25 children. These

were not pleasant rides. Mrs. Bernice Gilbert recalled, "We started in the dark. The horses were allowed to walk only and the chuck holes and water holes made a bouncing, bumpy ride. It was not fun for any of the children."



*A nine-month teacher's contract from 1906 for Edna Maynard for \$35 per month.*



# 1900-1909

*The graduating class of 1909. The seniors provided some jokes for the yearbook including: "Law of Physics—*

*The excellence of the behavior of all pupils varies universally with the distance of the teacher's desk from the pupils."*



*Students from the classes of 1908-1910 pose outside the old wooden schoolhouse.*

Sometime after the consolidation, Professor Ernest Burnham evaluated the district, comparing statistics from before and after the consolidation.

He found that before the consolidation, only 56.6 percent of the children listed on the census attended school, but afterwards, 70 percent attended school. The cost per capita was \$20.15 before the consolidation and afterwards the cost per capita was \$19 for the first year and \$23.07 for the second year.

He wrote: "Now what have we to show for these respective amounts? For \$20.15 each, our pupils have had the advantage of the little schoolhouse in the corner of the road, with little or no apparatus, no instruction in music, art, sewing, or any high school branches, while the

\$23.07 paid for a full high school, with music, sewing, art, good laboratory equipment and janitor, together with interest on a \$6,000 debt.

"A final advantage of consolidation," he wrote, "is: it brings about a better social condition. Pupils meet together in a large

group, and the half gulf between the city boy and the country boy is eliminated. Loitering by the wayside and listening to bad language is avoided. Teaching cultural subjects is made possible, thereby securing a happier and better rural home with happier and better citizens in it."



*The class of 1908, the first graduates of the new Comstock School District. From left, (standing): Phoebe Nutton, Ethel Pease, Rose Cretsinger. Middle row: Leon Miller, Mable Woodhouse, Raymond Warren. Front row: Gleason Allen, Clell Peer.*



# 1900-1909



The 1909 baseball season "did not bring the wished for results" for the team, but it did win the northern half of the County championship. Members included Gleason Allen, Harry Smith, H. Hoyt, Dick Hoyt, Ray Dingman, Peer, Glenn Woodhouse and Rex Nutten who noted, "Our school did not take the interest in the games it should have taken."

## Getting a Jump on Athletics

Athletics at Comstock began in 1908, just after the decision to consolidate the six districts into one system. The first team sponsored was a baseball team and within a short time, a basketball team and a girls' tennis team became part of the athletic program.

## K-College/C-College?

It was only a matter of a few thousand dollars between Kalamazoo College being Comstock College? Comstock was, at one time considered as the site for the oldest private college in the state of Michigan. Reverend Thomas W. Merrill, a pioneer Baptist missionary in Kalamazoo County, received a charter to build a college.

Officials in Grand Rapids, Clinton, Troy and Comstock lobbied for the college to be built in their towns. Horace H. Comstock, an early settler to Comstock, offered 80 acres of land and \$1,000 for the school to be located in his town. Because other citizens of Comstock promised money for Merrill to build the college and later did not deliver, the City of Kalamazoo won out.

Reverend Jeremiah Hall, a Baptist minister in Bronson (the City of Kalamazoo today), borrowed the necessary money so the Michigan and Huron Institute, which later became Kalamazoo College, could be built in Bronson.

In 1908, students living more than three-quarters of a mile from school rode in a covered wagon.



Each driver was expected to furnish blankets, steps and comfortable seats to earn about \$40 per year. Some students spent two hours per day on the "bus" in a long, uncomfortable ride.



Comstock teachers circa 1909. From left: A.M. Nulten, Eula Mason, Florence Nulten, Delia Laybore, Carmalita Barton, Hazel Siny, and Mable Woodhouse.



The optimistic tone didn't last, for by 1916, the consolidated school district broke down. Several reasons have been given for the breakdown. One was the ongoing conflicts between the Dutch celery farmers south of the river and the settlers of mixed nationalities north of the river. Comstock resident, Francis Gilbert, recalled, for example, the day that 26 railroad cars containing manure for the celery farms were lined up on the side while a south wind blew the smell north of the river.

Other concerns were the high taxes, the two-hour ride some children had to get to school, children not getting the education being paid for by the school taxes, and others simply wanting their children to be working on the celery farms.



*Cemetery Hill, in 1910, looking down on the old football and baseball fields. The church in the center was the Methodist Church that stood at the west end of Chubb St.*

## Consolidated Schools Idea Questioned

In a July 10, 1910 article from the *Michigan Farmer and Live Stock Journal*, A.M. Nutten detailed the Comstock Public Schools' process of becoming Michigan's first consolidated school.

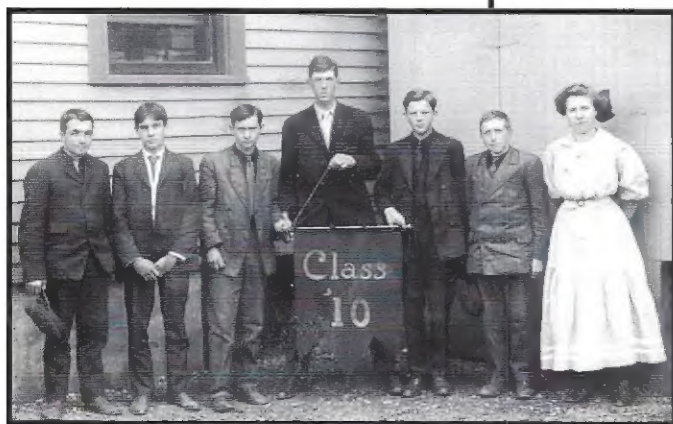
Comstock was Michigan's first experiment in consolidation, because it "embodied a full high school course with modern methods and modern ideas."

Many parents of the time were worried about the possible downfall of their children when they were sent to the city for their education. There, the "temptation is sometimes more than they can bear." This experiment was, therefore, born out of a need to better the rural social condition by giving the young people of the town a better preparation for life's duties through their education.

The new district, which covered 18 square miles, combined four old school districts and three abandoned schoolhouses. In 1910, the "modern school building" that was built for Comstock held 250 pupils and overlooked the celery fields.

It opened in the fall of 1906 with one principal and three assistants. By 1910, there were seven "regular" and two "special" teachers who taught classes like German, machine sewing, algebra and Michigan Civics.

Transportation to school consisted of three covered wagons and an interurban railroad. Nutten said he well-remembered the daily trip "through the clod [sic] and storm three-quarters of a mile to school." He said he remembered the frozen ears and numb feet, trials that would hardly be felt by students going to school in covered wagons.



*The class of 1910 outside the wooden school house.*





The 1911 Comstock High School class photo taken outside the wooden school house. Top row (from left): Fannie Jackson, Opal Mathews, Bernice Goodrich, Essica Chenery, a teacher, Lelah Crooks, Ruth Warren. Middle row (from left): M. Nutten, unknown, Gertrude Mason, Gail Crooks, Frie, Will Slager, Beth Allen, unknown, Dick Hoyt, John Chenery, unknown, unknown, Lizzie Hoyt, Leenbouts, Oariel Mathews, Florence Crestsinger, Oleis, Miller. Sitting (from left): unknown, Pease, Jacobson, Don Nutten, Paul Nutten, George Frie, George Mitchell, Charlie Mitchell, Ray Dingman, Don Goodrich, Harold Kemper, B. Jacobson, unknown, Dee Cleland, unknown, Foley, unknown, Sheilds, unknown, Rice.

Superintendent Nutten is credited with holding the factions together, but when he left in 1914, he was followed by three superintendents in quick succession - Lester Buchanan, Mr. Bowles and Clarence Stephenson.

At a school board meeting in the summer of 1916, a board member from the north side, Mr. Hale, insulted a board member from the south side, Louis Gilbert. The result was that Gilbert hit Hale with his fist and knocked him across the room.

Citing their dissatisfaction at a mass meeting, taxpayers demanded the resignation of both Stephenson and the school board.

The four-year high school was dissolved and students were sent to Western Normal or Central High School in Kalamazoo.

## FIRST SENIOR BANQUET 1911



**COMSTOCK HIGH SCHOOL**  
Comstock, Mich.  
Friday Evening, January 27th

## Comstock High School

### COMMENCEMENT

Friday, June 2nd, 1911, 7:30 p. m.

#### PART I

Waltz Dream (Strauss) - - - Orchestra  
Invocation - - - - - Rev. Armstrong  
A Garden of Singing Flowers  
(A Cantata in one scene)  
Bohemian Girl (Balle) - - - Orchestra

#### PART II

Violin Solo—Sextette from Donizetti's "Lucia de Larrimemoor"  
Clall Peer  
Address - - - - - Pres. D. B. Waldo  
Trio—"Charming Spring" (Mendelssohn) - Girls Glee Club  
(Violin Obligato, Clall Peer)  
Presentation of Diplomas  
Valedictory - - - - - Bernice Goodrich  
Selection - - - - - Glee Clubs  
Selection - - - - - Orchestra  
Benediction - - - - - Rev. Armstrong  
Director of Music, Mrs. Inez White

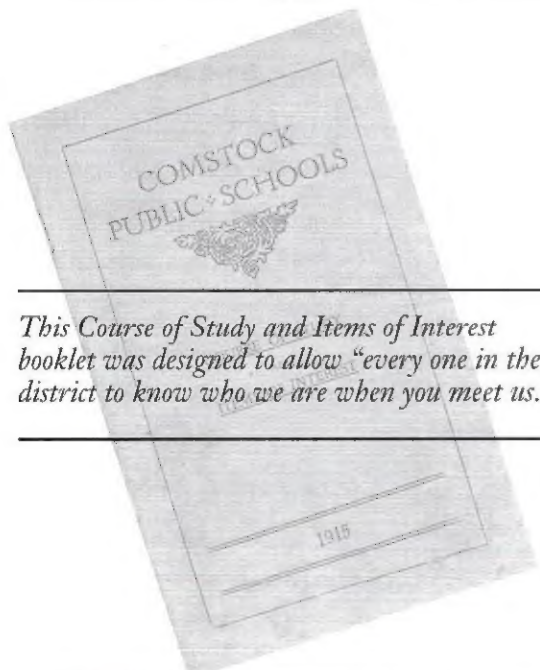


# 1910-1919



Second and third graders from 1913.

Principal Hatch attended Michigan State Normal School in Ypsilanti and later taught in Osceola County. She said in reference to her new job in Comstock schools "...if I can please the people as well as the position pleases me, I shall have lived up to my creed..."



This Course of Study and Items of Interest booklet was designed to allow "every one in the district to know who we are when you meet us."



Teachers from Comstock schools in 1913.

Town 2 South Range 10 West		Sec.	Acres	100ths	Value-	State	County	Town	Road	School	Highway	Bridge	Drain	Del. State	County Road	RECAPITULATION	
DESCRIPTION					tion	Tax	Tax	Tax	Repair	and 1/2	Improvement	Tax	Tax			TAX	Dollars
Fenced lot 14 (A. C. Clark)		19															1.32
Water lot 17					400.00	1.32	8.3	38	60	3.76	20	15		35	58		8.25
																TOTAL	8.25
																FEES	
																TOTAL	8.25

Receipt No. 95 Page No. 3 Sec Tax Roll

Treasurer's Office, Township of Comstock, Kalamazoo County, Mich. Nov 22 1909

RECEIVED OF F. C. Clark, Treasurer

Upon the following described tracts of Land and Personal Property, the sum stated below being Taxes assessed in said Township for the year 1909

E. P. Montague, Jr. Treasurer

Mr. Clark paid a total of \$8.25 for his 1909 taxes.



# 1910-1919

*The 1914-1915 basketball team was Kalamazoo County champion winning 9 of 10 of its games. Back row (from left): Coach C.E. Stephenson, R. Miller, R. Hayes. Front row (from left): L. Shellman, C. Westbrook, W. Hayes, H. Barnes, R. Slager.*



*Superintendent C.E. Stephenson graduated from Albion College and taught Hygiene and Physical Training in the Kalamazoo Public Schools before coming to Comstock. "I believe the teacher should help develop the muscle, mind and morals of the pupil for healthful, helpful and enjoyable living," Stephenson said in his creed in 1915.*



*The girls' 1915 basketball team.*



*The hill behind the old wooden school.*



# 1920-1929



Frank Noble, manual training teacher, and football and basketball coach, made about \$1,000 a year. Noble also coached spring sports, including baseball, track and tennis. The tennis and track teams received minimal supervision since he spent most of his time with the baseball team.

## Football Off to a Strong Start

In its 1923 inaugural season Comstock's football team ended with a 7-1-1 record, defeating Schoolcraft 19-0 in its first game. The referee for that game was the head coach at Vicksburg, a team Comstock played twice later in that season ending in a tie and a 26-0 loss for Comstock. Comstock began in the Bi-River Valley conference, which later gave way to the Kalamazoo Valley Association, and then joined the Wolverine Conference. Comstock won Bi-River Valley championships in 1939, 1941, 1942, 1944, the KVA in 1953 and 1963 and the Wolverine in 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1996.



*The 1923 football team. Back row left to right: Coach Harold Bunting, Carl Bacon, Ray Allen, Clyde Parkhurst, Larkin Noble, Superintendent Oscar A. Drake. Middle row left to right: Bob Beveridge, Olin McQueen, Stan Mason, Reginald Beveridge, Earl Gleason. Front row left to right: Ray Westbrook, Ralph Slager, Richard Allen, Bill Roschek, Cliff Ballenger.*

*The wooden schoolhouse, built in 1898 and remodeled in 1907, stands proudly in the 1920s.*



*The Hot Lunch Club was organized around 1927 to "provide a hot dish during the noon hour for those wishing it." The Community Brotherhood later made it possible to also distribute free milk to the children.*





*Marvin O. Hall (1927)  
Superintendent.*



*Edith Hall (1927) teacher and  
wife of Superintendent Hall.*

*R.C. "Shorty" Rose began  
as head caretaker of the  
school building grounds in  
July of 1917. He became a  
fixture in the halls and  
fields of the schools in  
Comstock for both students  
and staff for over a decade.  
—1927 Yearbook Dedication*



*Josephine Leenhouts  
(1927) teacher.*



*Betty Sheldon (1927)  
teacher.*



*Science teacher George  
Hoebne (1927).*

## Cream Clover

**"THE BEST MILK"**

Perfectly Pasteurized  
City Inspected

A rich, wholesome food for young  
or old; delivered in sterilized bottles,  
before breakfast, anywhere in Com-  
stock.

**Kalamazoo Creamery  
Company**

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## STOP AT Berry's Grocery

for

COLD DRINKS and  
FRESH VEGETABLES,  
PRICED RIGHT.

Highest Prices Paid for Fresh Eggs

We invite you all  
to give us a call.

**MRS. M. BERRY**

Phone 2 6176

South Comstock

COMPLIMENTS OF

## A. R. PEER Coal and Coke

COMSTOCK

*Advertisements from a 1920s Owlette*



# 1920-1929

Despite the dissolution of the consolidated school, the district continued to grow. In 1921, the southeast section of the Middle School was constructed and further additions being made in 1925, 1929, 1936, and 1941, with the final remodeling in 1972.

## Student-Teacher-Patron Handbook

of the

Comstock Public School



Issued by

The Board of Education

Comstock, Mich.

*This book aimed to write down the ideals and regulations of Comstock Public Schools for all to read and follow. The school board and faculty expected the students to read the handbook so they could "accept our responsibilities as part of the community" and become "better human beings."*



*Comstock's basketball team had a 1-9 record, winning its only game over Schoolcraft. The team was "handicapped by the fact that there was no gym in which the boys could practice." They later used the Kalamazoo Armory gym and Galesburg's school gym for practice. Members of the first team (varsity) were: Walter Smith, Charles Chrisman, James Wolfe, Ralph Kirk and Cecil Rork. The second team (javee) was made up of: George Smith, Burr Breston, Jake Mater, Gerald Gilbert and Gerald Forester.*

### 4 COMSTOCK SCHOOL

We believe in a spirit of loyalty and devotion to our school and its program of activities.

We believe in an attitude of courtesy, kindness, and consideration for those about us and a wholesome respect for the rights and privileges of others.

We furthermore, believe that Comstock Public School offers an opportunity to each of us to train for the highest type of Christian leadership and a life of usefulness in our community.

"Each for all and all for each."

#### TRY TO BE AN IDEAL

Review the list, rate yourself once a month as excellent, satisfactory or unsatisfactory on each one, and then do something about it.

1. Do I hurt others by passing on interesting but ill-founded gossip?
2. Am I regular in attendance?
3. Do I rely on myself to get my lessons?
4. Do I throw paper or refuse on the floor or grounds instead of dropping it in the baskets provided?
5. Am I courteous to all my fellows?
6. If I have a grievance, do I discuss it in private rather than raise a disturbance in public?
7. Do I have with me the books, pencils, and equipment necessary for the recitation or the study period?
8. Do I make up my lessons after absence without pressure from the teacher?
9. Do I talk in class without recognition from the teacher?
10. Do I try to show off during recitation?
11. Do I try to prepare another lesson while in class?

### HAND BOOK 1928-1929 5

12. Do I sit in a "slouchy" position?
13. Do I intentionally embarrass another by laughing at his mistakes and misfortunes?
14. Do I show consideration for others by dressing simply, even though my parents can afford to dress me much better?
15. Am I hurting my health by ignoring rules of health?
16. Am I hurting myself in ignoring suggestions of my parents, teachers, or fellow students?
17. If I fail in scholarship do I know why?
18. Will I cheat to get through if I have not each day's work?
19. Do I need lip stick and rouge to make myself passable in appearance?
20. Do I know where I am heading?

#### MARKING

Since the high school is somewhat selective, the definite goal of leadership is to be kept before the pupils at all times.

The following qualities are observable in the high school pupil and can be made the basis of deducting the valid estimate of progress in education:

1. Scholarship, 2. Initiative, 3. Attitude, 4. Co-operation, 5. Individual Improvement.
1. By Scholarship we refer to the pupil's ability and skill in a comprehensive use of the subject matter presented.
2. By Initiative we refer to those spontaneous qualities that reveal the student as a group leader and an efficient student.
3. By Attitude we refer to the pupil's apparent point of view in matters vital to his education and to the success of the school.
4. By Co-operation we refer to the pupil's



# 1920-1929

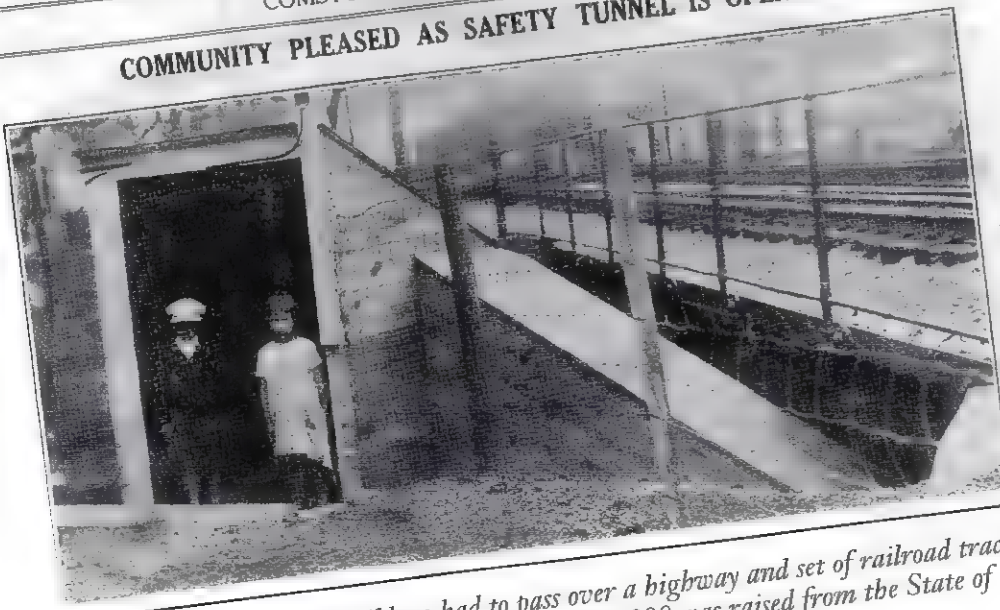


*The 1929 Board of Education*

## SEES ALL **THE OWL** KNOWS ALL

COMSTOCK, MICHIGAN, APRIL, 1929

### COMMUNITY PLEASED AS SAFETY TUNNEL IS OPENED



*Before 1929, about 600 children had to pass over a highway and set of railroad tracks on their way to school. In April of 1929, about \$1000 was raised from the State of Michigan to build a safety tunnel linking the two areas.*

## THE OLD SCHOOL BELL

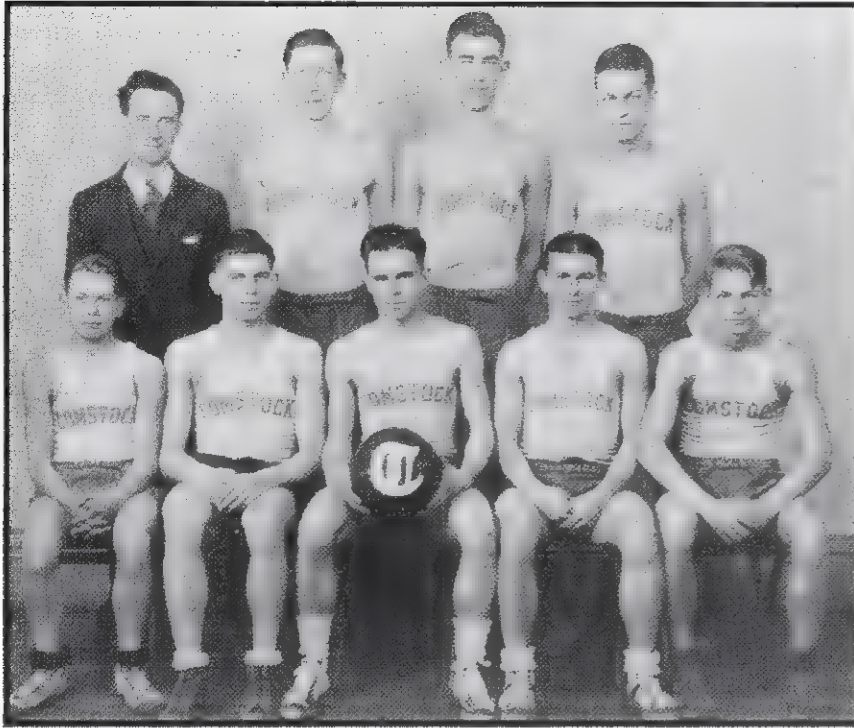
BY WESLEY CRAWFORD

You remember when you were little  
tads

Just starting out to school,  
With lunch pail on your arm-  
And your pencil box and rule?  
You were always in a hurry,  
Always striving, hard and well  
To reach the little schoolhouse  
Before teacher rang the bell.  
Truly, our lives were guided  
By the clanging bronzen ring  
Of the old bell in the tower  
With its ponderous sway and swing.  
It told us when to come to work,  
Away from fun and play.  
It told us when to turn homeward  
At the close of the eventful day.  
Tonight our thoughts are with us,  
Of these few short happy years.  
Some thoughts bring us happiness  
While others bring us tears.  
Now each must use his own legs  
On the weary road of life.  
And we each shall have our full share  
Of labor, grief and strife.  
So, kind friends and neighbors  
This is our last farewell.  
We will never again assemble  
At the ringing of the old school bell.  
The thoughts of friends of our school  
days,  
The memories that make the heart  
swell,  
Side by side shall linger in our breasts  
With memories of the old school bell.  
Now our paths divide and each travels  
to his fate,  
So please retain kind memories  
Of the class of '28.



## 1930-1939



*The 1931 Comstock basketball team ended its season with an 8-4 record and a 31-10 loss to Portage in the district tournament. Back row (from left): Coach Frank Noble, Richard Hartman, Otto Dopp, John House. Front row (from left): Lester Heath, Robert Barnes, Kenneth Pierce (Captain), Lloyd Johnson, Elmer Sutton.*

### Girls Offered Shop Class

In 1938, for the first time, girls were allowed to take the shop course, but it was a class much different from the shop classes we think of today. It was a "program suitable for general knowledge usable about the home..." and only offered to upper class girls as an elective.

*Helen Dunlap received the Golden Eaglet award, the highest honor of the Girl Scout program, in December of 1936. Dunlap was the second Comstock resident to receive the honor "conferred only upon that girl whose character, physical and mental fitness...will mark her as a First Class Girl Scout..." Dunlap later became a Comstock teacher.*



*Elementary school teachers in 1931. Back row (from left): Lucille Rix, 5th; Lois Melbourn, 2nd; Irene Ray, 2nd; Velva Witter, 1st; Emma Fooy, Remedial; Josephine Schau, Kindergarten. Front row (from left): Edyth Hall, 4th; Claudia Blanchard, 1st; Evelyn Sherwood, 6th; Betty Sheldon, 3rd; Florence Swank, Special.*



# 1930-1939



*The 1931 School Board. Back row (from left): James McDowell, Secretary; Carl McQueen, President; George White, Trustee. Front row (from left): Harry Winterburn, Trustee; Roy Carpenter, Treasurer.*

In 1936, a Public Works Administration project was announced for the building of a \$49,000 addition to the grade school to include an auditorium, a gymnasium, and a heating plant.

*Coach Weston Hutchins led Comstock's 1935 football team to a 5-2-2 record and a 6-0 win over "its ancient rival Galesburg."*





# 1930-1939

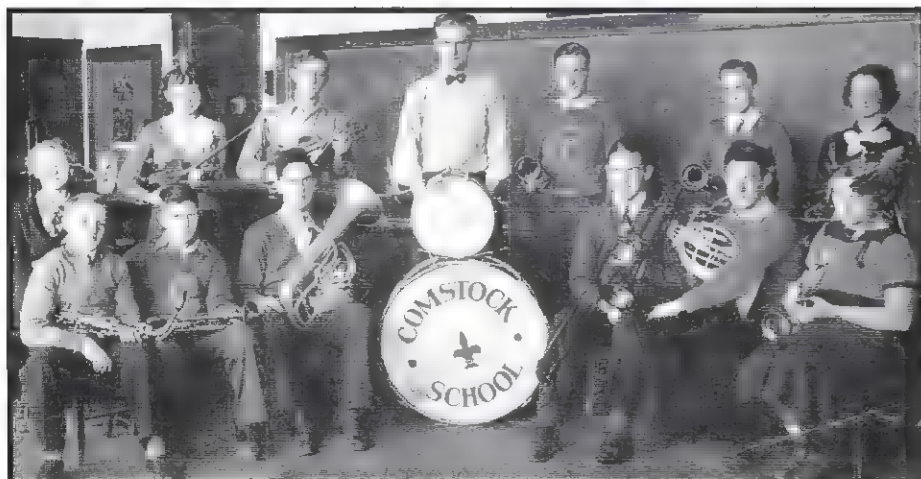
The 1935 Board of Education included top row, (from left): Sherman Anderson, President; Harry Winterburn, Treasurer. Bottom row (from left): R.G. Spoor, Trustee; Roy Carpenter, Secretary; Joseph E. Sager, Trustee.



The safety patrol from 1936-1937.



The 1936 Comstock baseball team finished its season at 6-5. Front row (from left): Sandell, Norwood, Bellisle, Burkhead, Petto, Sutton and Terrell. Second row (from left): Kissel, Kloosterman, Fabey, Noble, Heystek, Waldo, Jaquays, Coach Hutchins. Third row (from left): Goodacre, Angle, VanOosterum, Stuut, LaMere, Crafts, Bell. Back row (from left): Ennis, DeHaan, Willett, Meints, Boven, Carpenter.



The orchestra began in October of 1936 under the direction of Virginia Moltz and Robert Bowen. Its 15 members were: Charles Dingman, Vivian Shellman and Thelma Palmer on violin; Edward Weddon and Keneth Dingman on clarinet; Faith McLennan on flute; Robert Bowen, Robert Kline and Jack Eager on cornet; David Fesler and Margaret McQueen on saxophone; Lloyd Havens on trombone; Albert Winterburn on baritone; Perley Willett on drums and Deloras Combs on piano.



## RIVER BRIDGE RESOLUTION

The following resolution was presented and adopted at the February Meeting of the Board of Education. Similar resolutions were passed by our Township Board, Civic League, Parent-Teacher Ass'n and the County Board of Supervisors. Our County Board of Road Commissioners have given this project first place on future improvements and a four way modern bridge with foot walk on both sides is under consideration. A local committee will present the resolutions to our State Road Commissioner in the near future with the hope for State Aid in connection with the Home to Market appropriation made by the State Legislature.

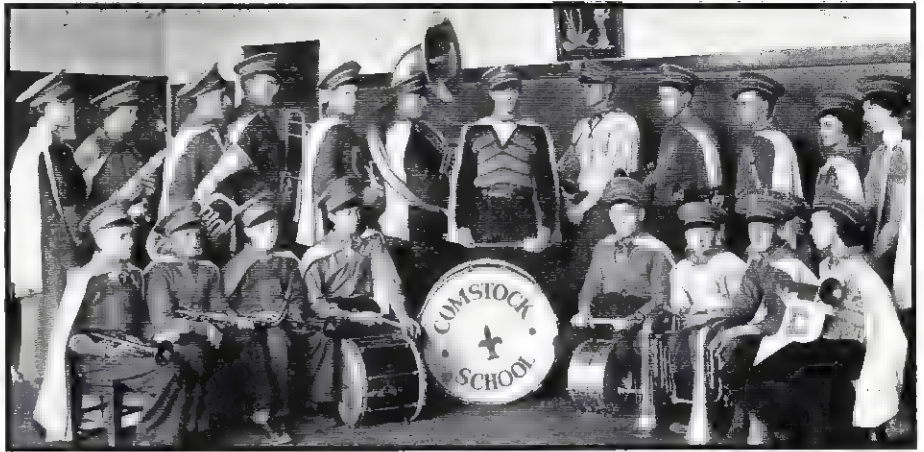
WHEREAS, the Board of Education of School District No. 1 Fractional Comstock Township is charged with certain responsibility concerning the safety and welfare of the children attending our school, and,

WHEREAS more than three hundred of the children attending this school live south of the Kalamazoo River and must of necessity cross the river in going to and from school, and,

WHEREAS for a number of years these children have been able to use a foot bridge, separate from the general traffic bridge for that purpose, affording them comparative safety, but which bridge has recently been condemned and removed, thus making it necessary that these children cross the long, narrow, one-way-traffic bridge, creating a very dangerous situation and one which is bound to result in injury or death to some of these children. Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that this Board of Education do all in its power to bring before the proper authorities the dangerous situation now existing and urge that a proper and adequate bridge be built to replace the present obsolete and unsafe structure now in use, and further be it

RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Honorable Murray D. VanWagoner, State Highway Commissioner and to the Kalamazoo County Road Commission, with a request that they take whatever steps may be necessary to accomplish this result.



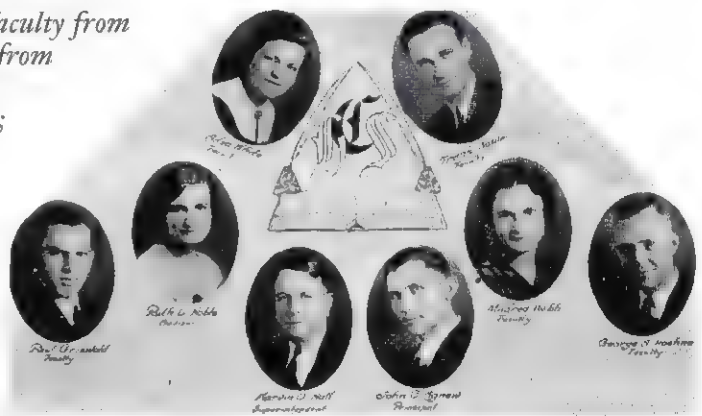
*The first school band debuted in September 1936 at the School Carnival. They also performed at pep assemblies and football games.*

*The high school faculty from 1935, clockwise (from bottom left): Paul Griswold, faculty;*

*Ruth L. Noble, advisor; Ailsa White, faculty; Frank Noble, faculty;*

*Mildred Webb, faculty; George A. Hoehne, faculty; John C. Agnew,*

*Principal; Marvin O. Hall, Superintendent.*



## River Bridge Unfit

On August 24, 1934, an observation was made in the amount of traffic that passed over the Kalamazoo river bridge in Comstock. The following are the results of that observation:

Pleasure Cars	592
Light Trucks	339
Heavy Trucks	124
Pedestrians	445
Motorcycles	3
Bikes	92
Baby Cabs	3
Horse Drawn Vehicles	2
Trailers	12

A month later the bridge was declared inadequate and dangerous for vehicles and pedestrians.



# 1930-1939

*Ads from the 1939 Owlette.*

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COMSTOCK, MICHIGAN

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perhaps even a serious accident. Our special Sinclairize-  
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recommendations to make winter driving safer. Take ad-  
vantage of this offer.

**Middleton's Super Service**

U. S. 12 Comstock, Michigan Phone 9532

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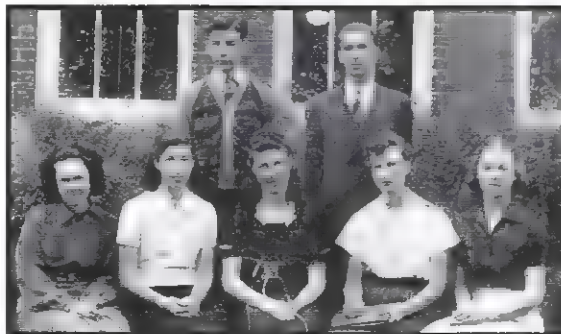
## RITZ DRY CLEANERS

3192 E. Michigan Avenue

Phone 2-8717

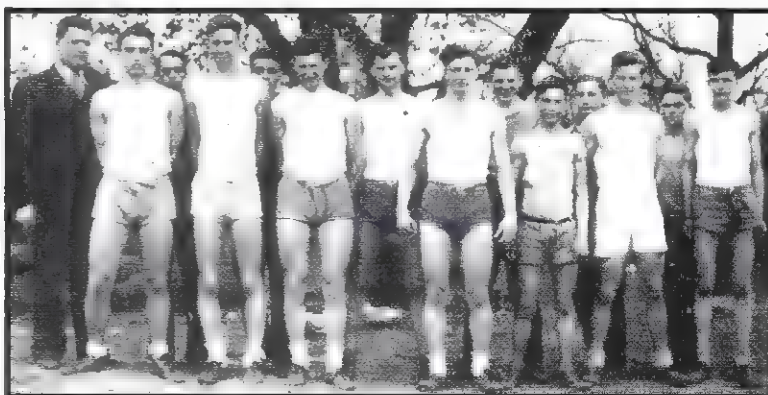


*The 1937 construction of the high school gym, which is where the administration building now stands.*



*The 1938-1939 Debate Squad included, back row (from left): Allen Carpenter, Coach Westley Rowland. Front row (from left): Ellen Shafer, Helen Taylor, Juanita Busbouse, Willah Skinner, Joyce Reed.*

*The 1937 track and field team, coached by Arthur Middleton, held its Annual Track and Field Day on May 21. Comstock placed second behind Portage.*





# 1930-1939

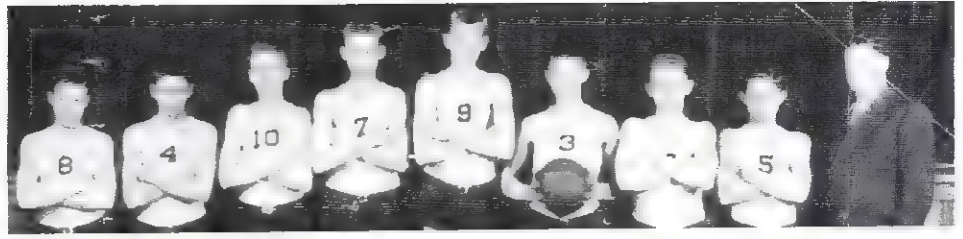
**To the Teachers of the Comstock Public School:**

I wish to welcome you to our community and to my Service Station. I am here to give you that good Standard Oil Service and I hope that we may get acquainted in the very near future. If you so desire, open an account and pay each pay day. I will call at the school for your car and return it fully serviced.

Please give me a trial and I will convince you that you get your best service from

**OLIN S. McQUEEN**  
Your Standard Oil Co.

*An ad from the September 1939 Owlette.*

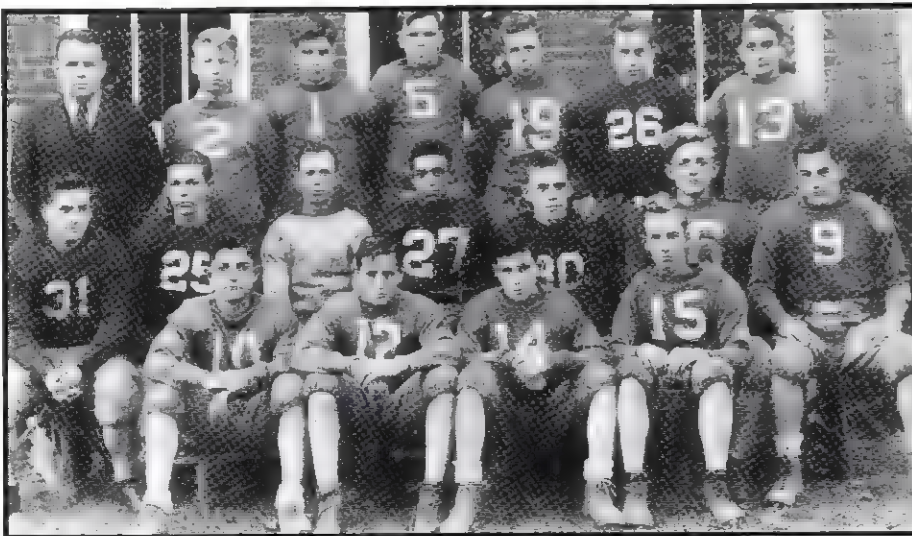


*The 1939 boys basketball teams. (From left) David E. Fesler, Harold Ellinger, Robert Kline, Henry VandeStreek, Edward VandeStreek, James Bell, Kenneth Dunlap, Donald Dunlap, Coach Arthur Middleton.*

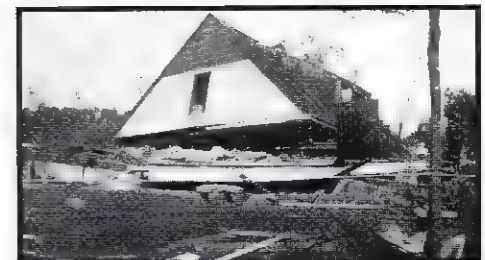


*Girls' basketball team in 1939: (From left) Coach Faith MacLennan, Nina Palmer, MaryBelle Starner, Genevieve Bell, Kathleen Skinner, Virginia Twigg, Beverly Vose, Twila Whipple, Willab Skinner, Bettie Savage, Gertrude Lambeck, Jean Lambeck, Shirley White, Barbara Meints.*

*These are examples of the many south Comstock area homes that were damaged by a tornado on August 8, 1939. Virtually every home on River St., south of Lake St. in the Abbey and Francis Street area were demolished or damaged. This event attracted many sightseers from several out-of-state places. It was estimated several thousand of the "curious public" passed through the area.*



*Comstock's 1938 football team from a game program against Galesburg. Top row (from left): Coach James Wolfe, A. Smith, A. Carpenter, M. Belden, K. Dingman, R. Laverack, F. Weddon. Middle row (from left): N. Stender, J. Bell, K. Nicely, R. Bradley, E. Schuyler, K. Dunlap, A. Bunting. Front row (from left): D. Dunlap, D. Fesler, J. Eager, H. Traxler.*



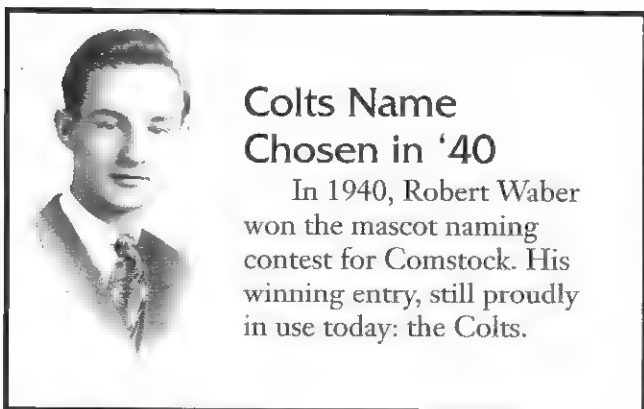


# 1940-1949

The 1940 Kalamazoo County Athletic Association winners. The five starters who led the way to a 39-24 victory over Portage are (from left) Ken Dunlap, Harold Ellinger, Bob Bellisle, Hank VanderStreek and Edward VanderStreek. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)



The 1940 basketball team ended its season with an 8-4 record. Front row (from left): Ken Dunlap, D. Dunlap, Harold Ellinger (captain), J. Adams, Bob Bellisle. Back row (from left): B. Kemple, Robert Kline, Hank VanderStreek, Edward VanderStreek, E. Weddon, Coach Arthur Middleton.



The May 1940 Owlette listed several achievements, both academic and athletic, from that school year.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Perhaps the most outstanding year in the history of the Comstock High School is the year which is brilliantly drawing to a close. It has held an undiminished stream of victories of which everyone might well be proud. In counting these honors, we find:

An undefeated Football season.

Capturing the County Championship for Boys' Basketball and the County Co-championship for Girls' Basketball.

District Elimination Debate Tournament Championship.

Undefeated Baseball, regular schedule.

State District Declamation Championship.

Debate Team participated in 55 debates and went to the State Semi-Finals.

County Championship in Boys' Tennis Doubles.

County Championship in Girls' Tennis Singles.



# 1940-1949

*Coach Jim Wolfe graduated from Comstock High School in the 1920s. He coached baseball and football and also taught.*

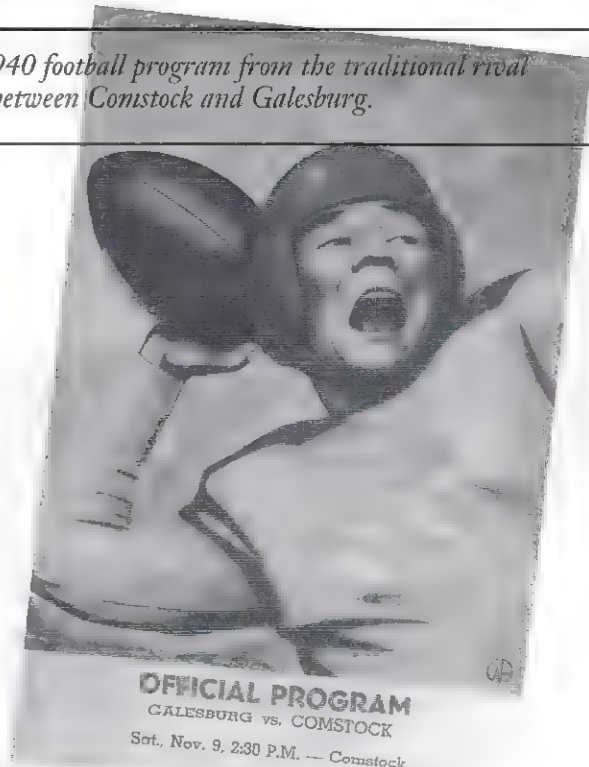


*The 1940 girls' basketball team ended its season with a 6-1-1 record and a co-county championship title with Galesburg. Front row (from left): B. Vose, Mary Belle Starner, Jean Lambeck (captain), K. Skinner, G. Bell, R. Quantz. Back row (from left): B. Koss, G. Vose, Bettie Savage, B. Meints, Shirley White, Twila Whipple, Willah Skinner, Coach Faith MacLennan.*

*Workers tore down this landmark, believed to have been built in the early 1830s, in 1940. It was the tavern, located on North Prairie Road and US 12, where early settlers stopped for an overnight rest and drink.*



*The 1940 football program from the traditional rival game between Comstock and Galesburg.*





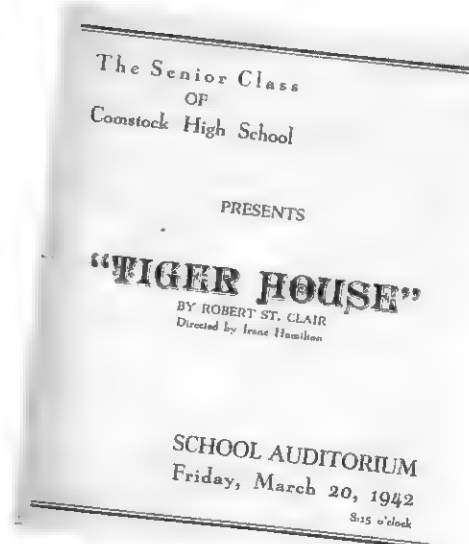
# 1940-1949

Comstock's 1941 school band. Front row (from left): H. Molenaar, J. Eager, S. Vose, H. Parkhurst, G. Coy, B. Cowels, B. Russell, J. Smith. Second row (from left): Director Juckett, B. McMahon, A. Skinner, V. Cowels, R. Waldo, N. Burgh, B. Smythe, G. Vose. Back row (from left): R. Quantz, J.W. Leversee, Leslie Leversee, Leon Leversee, M. Giddings, C. Peterson, M. Hoebne.



The first Comstock uniforms with the Colts name on them. The 1941 baseball team, back row (from left): Coach James Wolfe, R. Bellisle, R. Waldo, J. Adams, B. Kemple, G. Sherwood, E. Weddon. Front row (from left): R. Buckmaster, W. Starner, W. Reynolds, D. Dunlap, K. Dunlap.

Boys who were called to serve their country in the 1940s, who were 18 and still in high school, received their diplomas "in absentia."



The senior cast of "Tiger House" shown here in 1942. The play was directed by Irene Hamilton.



Third and fourth graders from 1941.





Students in the chemistry lab "considering the mysteries of chemical precipitation." Boys (from left): Dale Ickes, Jack Sherman, Charles Horton and Robert Taylor. Girls (in background): Evelyn Brinkert, Gertrude Pollard, Dorothy Norwood and Dorcas Smith.



Comstock's 1941 graduating class.

At the regular March Board of Education meeting where "building of character is the end of all education."

From left to right: Lewis Eager, President Sherman Anderson, Secretary Roy Carpenter, Treasurer Harry Winterburn, Joseph Sager.



## "LITTLE WOMEN"

### Annual Senior Play

"Little Women," will be presented April 4, at 8:15 o'clock in the School Auditorium by the Senior Class of Comstock High School, under the direction of Irene Hamilton.

The play is an excellent dramatization by Marian DeForest of the immortal characters created by Louisa M. Alcott in her book "Little Women." Jo, Meg, Amy, and Beth — the four March sisters — provide tears and laughter in their escapades and antics. They are supported by an excellent cast who bring to life friends and neighbors of the March girls.

Such scenes as the cutting of Jo's hair to provide money for her mother's trip; the good times had with Laurie, the boy next door; Beth's tragic illness; the exciting surprise of the birth of the babies; Professor Bhaer's romantic proposal — all contribute to make the play not only enjoyable and entertaining but worthwhile as well.

The play takes place during the era of the Civil War. To portray this period of history the community has been canvassed for authentic costumes and properties. Many residents have loaned dresses, hats, costumes, furniture, and properties that were worn and used during the 1860's.

For weeks the cast has been working nightly to bring to the public a fine performance.

The following Seniors comprise the cast of "Little Women":

Mr. March.....	Owen Snyder
Mrs. March.....	Barbara Meints
Meg.....	Joyce Reed
Jo.....	Wanita Stender
Beth.....	Genevieve Bell
Amy.....	Dorothy Norwood
Aunt March.....	Helen Taylor
Mr. Laurence.....	Jack Eager
Laurie.....	Oliver Archer
Professor Bhaer.....	Elwood Schuyler
John Brooke.....	Edward Weddon
Harriett Mullett.....	Evelyn Brinkert

The cast is ably supported by the following committees:

Staging.....	Donald Dunlap, Edward VandeStreek
Properties.....	Ruth Mary Allen
Costumes.....	Constance Scott
Prompting.....	Juanita Bushouse

Tickets for the play may be obtained from the Junior High School students.

"Little Women" is a play that will appeal to young and old alike — a noteworthy dramatization of an immortal book, and a capacity crowd is expected for the performance.



A sign of spring every year was children jumping rope during recess, because, as the original caption read "recess and play are necessary for best work in school."

## 1940-1949



*The school house was built in 1898 as a two-room, one-story country school. In 1907 it was remodeled into a two-story building, housing a full 12 grades of school.*

*Viola Watts shares a smile with the camera in the 1940s. At the far right is the old fire escape. When the fire alarm would sound, those students in the front two rows of the class would go down the stairs. Those in the back four rows and in the library would go down the fire escape. Fire drills were a "fiasco" according to one participant.*



*A 1941 high school typing class under the supervision of Paul Griswold (far rear standing).*

*In 1942, Kathleen Skinner won the Honor Cup, Comstock's award for extra-curricular activities.*



*The new high school building was dedicated in November of 1942. With "ample storage space" and a "home nursing room," the building was a far cry from the old country school.*

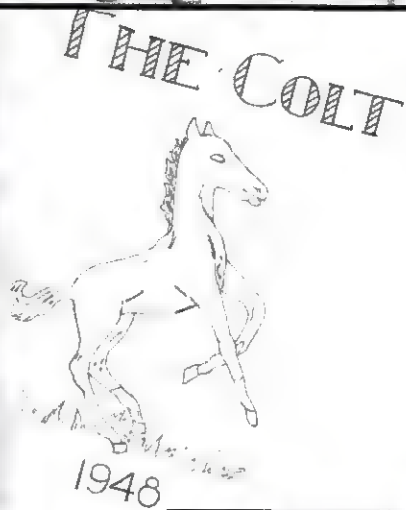


# 1940-1949

The 1943 tennis team. Back row (from left): Raymond Juday, Cliff Skinner, Ross Allen, Robert Diston, Coach Clifford Juday. Front row (from left): Coach Shirley Smith, Eleonor Walker, Violet Wilson, Gail Vose.



The Comstock High School class of 1943.



Members of the 1947-1948 student council include back row (from left): Arthur Middleton, Eric Peterson, Harold Molenaar, Bob Blue, Ralph Zandt, John Fullager. Front row (from left): June Rother, Janet Clark, Helen Kemp, Nancy Stafford, Clyde Sherwood, Gene Coy.

Prom royalty at the Valentine's dance in 1949—Grace Carter and Rodney Leverage.



# 1940-1949



*Comstock's Class of 1948 dedicated its yearbook to faculty members George Hoebne and Betty Sheldon. "Their leadership and friendship has been highly valued by all students and alumni of Comstock School."*



*In 1947, children cross under the bridge instead of over old US 12.*



*The 1944 Girls' Basketball team enjoyed an undefeated season. The team was, front row from left: Freja Peterson, Bonnie Arends, Alberta Vandestreek, Jean Hilgeman, Henrietta Sootsman. Back row: Nancy Stafford, Maxine Maury, Jean MacPherson, Betty Stuut, Pauline McMains, Shirley Vose, Coach Shirley Smith.*

*Tony Haring, a seventh grader, directs children across the street in his first year of safety patrol (1947). (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalama-zoo Gazette.)*

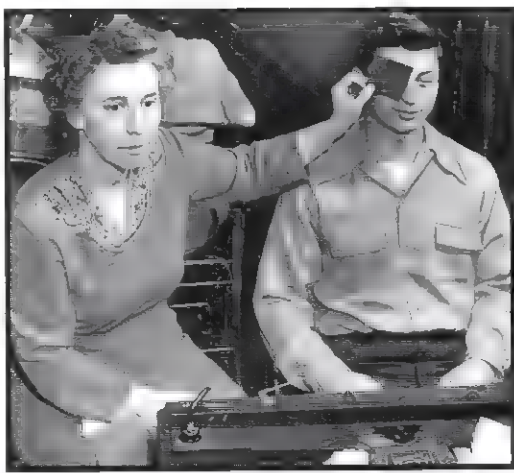


**Bus service in the Comstock School District began in 1948.**



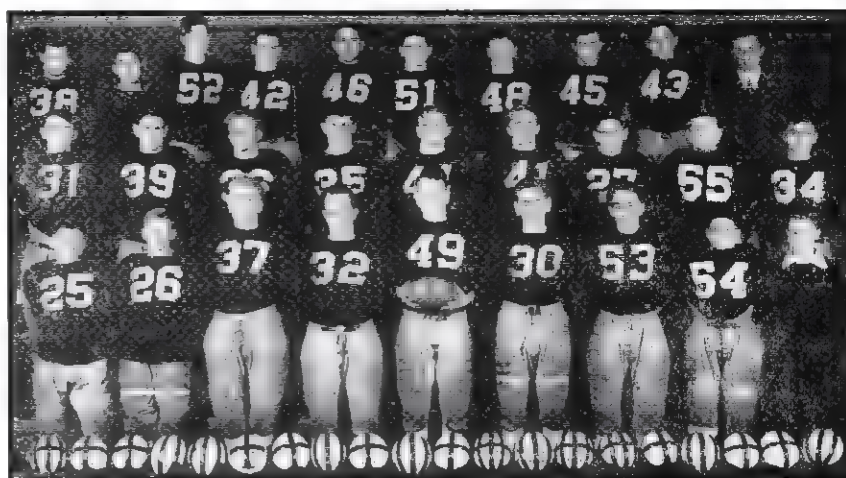
## Extracurricular Activities Draw Attendance

Extracurricular activities have been an important part of the Comstock Schools. For example, in 1941, it was reported that the junior class play, "It Happened Next Tuesday," was attended by a near-capacity crowd of 500 people in the school's auditorium. That same year speech students won awards in the sub-district speech contest at Wayland with three students taking first honors and one student taking a third-place award.



Alice Rains gives Fred Kiser a vision test at Comstock School in 1948.

A teacher's contract for Dola Guernsey in 1948 for \$280 per month.



The 1943 football team which finished 7-1, lost its only game to Galesburg 12-0. The team is, front row from left: Jack Nuyen, Bob Sparrow, Karl Peterson, Fred Smith, Clifford Skinner, Raymond Juday, John Palmer, Carl Scott, Edward Prough and the student manager. Middle row: Richard LaMere, William Sootsman, Charles Smeltzer, Jack Sparks, William Clark, Paul Nichols, Johnnie Eager, James Sandell, William Bell. Back row: Marion Taylor, Harvey Williams, James Waldo, Jack Hudson, Harley Pierce, Donald Starner, Robert Prough, Martin Hoehne, Robert Distin and Coach Benjamin Murray.

TEACHER'S CONTRACT--WPA School  
District Board

317

TEACHER'S CONTRACT

It is hereby Contracted and Agreed, Between the DISTRICT BOARD of School District No. 5  
in the Township of... Comstock... and State of Michigan, and... Dola Guernsey... County of... Kalamazoo  
in said County, that the said... Dola Guernsey... shall teach the school of said  
district for the term of... September nine (9) day of... 1948... months, commencing on the... seventh  
day of... 1948... and that there shall be... vacation periods of... days beginning on the following dates:...

The said... Dola Guernsey... agrees to faithfully keep a correct list of the pupils, grade and age of each attending school; to faithfully observe and enforce the rules and regulations established by the District Board of said District for the external management of said school and endeavor to preserve in good condition and order the school grounds, furniture and such other district property as may come under... her... supervision. The said... Dola Guernsey... further agrees to teach the subject of physiology and hygiene with special reference to the effects of alcoholic drinks and narcotics as required by law, and also to give instruction in regard to the mode by which dangerous communicable diseases are spread, the best methods for the restriction and prevention of such diseases, and will report the facts in regard to all such instruction to the Director at the close of the school term or year.

The said... Dola Guernsey... further agrees to prepare a report at the close of the school term or year showing the foregoing facts, also the number of days each pupil attended school, the aggregate attendance, the average daily attendance, and the percentage of attendance, together with such other items as the said District Board or the Commissioner of Schools may require, and that all this information and all these reports shall be placed in the hands of the Director at the close of the school term or year and prior to receiving the wages for the last month's labor.

The said District Board, in behalf of said district, agrees to provide a water supply for the school, to keep the schoolhouse in good repair, and the school grounds in good and sanitary condition, to provide proper and necessary fuel, to provide a janitor, or allow the teacher... dollars per month for such service, to purchase and place in the schoolroom the necessary appendages specified in the law, to provide the teacher and pupils with proper chairs and appliances for giving instruction in the subjects above mentioned, and to do all things that will promote the welfare and success of the school, and to pay said... Dola Guernsey... for the term of... months, \$280.00 for the ninth month, the sum of \$280.00 per month for eight months, \$310.00 for the ninth month.

The said... Dola Guernsey... shall be dismissed from school by the said District Board for gross immorality or violation of contract, or shall permit... her... certificate of qualification to expire, or shall have said certificate annulled or suspended by the County Board of School Examiners, or other lawful authority... shall not be entitled to any compensation from and after such annulment, suspension or dismissal.

It is further agreed between the parties of this contract that ten (10) days sick leave shall be allowed without loss of salary.

# 1950-1959

*Members of a third-grade classroom at West Elementary proudly display their project in the 1950s. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)*



## Instructions for Completing New Teacher Paperwork-September 8, 1950

Please read instructions carefully for filling out your membership. You will note there are three separate slips in the pad, Michigan Education Association, National Education Association and Local County. The first two organizations are not compulsory but the Local County is. Unless you pay this fee you are not registered in the County for teaching. The fee is \$1.00 for men and \$.50 for women. Do not fill out any forms for M.E.A. and N.E.A. if you are not going to become a member. These forms properly filled out plus your money is due Wednesday, September 20th. Please do not turn it in before or later. Please do not spoil or lose your membership slips because there aren't any more. Faculty members teaching in East and West may turn their money and slips to Mrs. Rains or some other designated member and that person be responsible for getting it to the office if you choose.

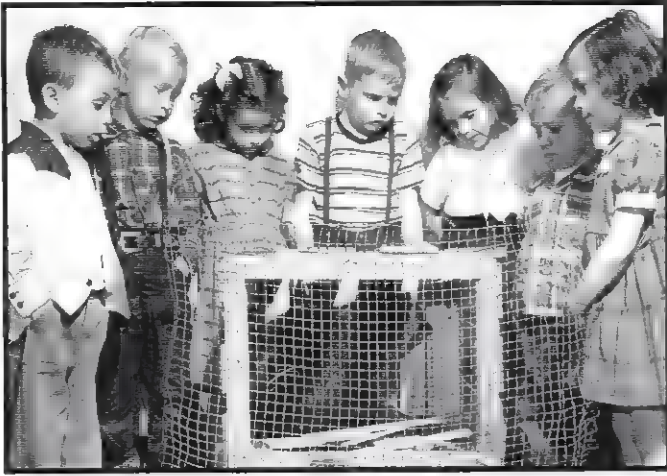
-L.F. Greene



*The Board of Education in 1951.*



## 1950-1959



*Students at Comstock's West Elementary were treated to a visit by a raccoon in 1953. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)*



*Comstock's elementary students at a 1951 Halloween party. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)*



*Spring clean-up day in the 1950s.*



*The Comstock High School custodians in 1951. Back row (from left): Frank Molenaar, Robert Sandell, Ray Michel, Mack Lewis. Front row: Beachler Nichols, Nettie Garrison and Lewis Eager.*

# 1950-1959



*Robert Siebert and Karla Owen are two students who took advantage of painting classes at the Kalamazoo Art Center in 1954. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)*

*(From left) Phyllis Yax, Donald Oman and Norma Smith, sixth grade students and Junior American Citizen Club members, print a monthly newspaper as one of their projects at West Elementary. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)*



*Comstock High School band in 1957: standing (from left): J. Maxon, D. Lumbert, H. Holmes, P. Rysenga, B. She, J. Carpenter, T. Furney, D. Moore, B. Bowden, J. Terrell, D. Ledbetter, J. Tyler, D. Hartwell. Third row: L. Lea (from left): B. Chamberlain, E. Mann, S. Cowgill, B. Sandell, M. Lisk, P. Whipple, L. Moffit, N. Wilkens, G. W (left): R. Croy, J. Boven, B. Elmore, N. Peterson, R. Kitzmiller, J. Myers, J. Adams, C. Rose, M. Chrisman, J. O*





## 1950-1959



*The Comstock Board of Education, (circa 1956 ) standing (from left): Ben Murrey, Superintendent; Vern Norwood, Secretary; Celer Stafford, Trustee. Seated (from left): Mary Bell, Trustee; Arthur Middleton, President; Thomas Boven, Treasurer.*

*ppard, M. Elliot, P. Leversee. Back row sitting (from left): C. Whipple, S. Heath, O. Pirtle, V. VanNus, J. Shaw, n, S. Smeltzer, D. Russon, R. Kitzmiller, G. Flegal, L. Rose, D. Hite, F. Heath, T. Shepperdson. Second row ilkens, J. Boven, D. Michel, C. Mort, V. Pollard, L. Coe, M. Kennedy, C. Coe, K. Rysenga. Front row (from enwaller.*



## 1950-1959

The class of 1951 was the first class at Comstock High School to be offered Driver Training. Arthur Middleton was the instructor.



*The 1957 tennis team included, (from left): C. Middleton, B. Moody, G. Boven, N. Milburn, M. Hogue, R. Angaley, C. Stevens, N. Martin, M. Blue, H. Reynolds, R. Kitzmiller, A. Smith, A. Woodend, P. Whipple, J. Lafluer, Coach J. Roberts.*



*The 1959 track team finished its season at 3-4. Team members are, back row (from left): B. Lyons, G. Rickstad, D. VanBruggen, T. Mackey, L. French, R. Nichols, D. Baker, K. Harring. Middle row (from left): R. Cole, B. Flegal, J. Newman, B. MacPherson, J. Haas, C. Elliot, T. Crawford, J. French, Coach Milt Christen. Front row (from left): L. House, A. Rickstad, C. Pratt, J. Winterburn, J. Hollenbeck, L. Bunting, J. Werner.*

*In the 1950s, East and West Elementaries were built to relieve the overcrowding in the district's one elementary school. North Elementary (at right) was built in 1958.*





## Teachers' Bulletin Highlights District Facts

The 1954-1955 Comstock Public Schools Teachers' Bulletin compiled the following facts about the district at that time:

- There was one superintendent and three principals.
- The Central Building housed grades 7-12 and West Elementary and East Elementary taught grades K-6.
- One librarian and one music teacher were shared between the two buildings.
- There were six bus drivers, 12 custodians and one school crossing guard.
- Students attended school for 175 days with 180 days of "membership."
- The school day was from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. "By extending the time of our school day beyond the length of the student's day, we will enable parents to consult teachers in regard to school work of their children after school hours, and also give the teachers time to prepare for the following day."
- The Bulletin hoped "every teacher should take advantage of all the daylight possible and use artificial light only when necessary."
- Students did not have to go to school during the County or 4-H Fairs.
- Salary for non-degree teachers presently in the system was a maximum of \$4,000/year. The base salary of a first-year teacher was \$3,000 for those with a BA and \$3,500 for those with an MA. The top salary was \$4,700 with a BA and \$4,900 with an MA.
- The head coaches of the football and basketball teams were paid \$300 and the girls' basketball coach was paid \$100.

*Future nurses in 1959*

*included (from left) V. Born, B. Peck, J. O'Brien, M. Crisman, J. Croy, C. Rose, B. Elmore, S. Sharpe, N. Martin, M. Lisk, and patient, Miss Bernadine Mott, Advisor.*

*To gain experience, the girls took training at Borgess Hospital and then worked on a volunteer basis.*



"The job we give you is tremendous! The help we have tried to give is minute. And I say now, because the chance may not come again... Thank you"

—B.J. Murrey,  
Superintendent, 1959



*The class of 1959 valedictorian, Gail Boven.*



*Larry Rolfe and his orchestra played for the guests at the 1958 senior prom.*

# 1960-1969



The class of 1960 officers and advisors, back row (from left): Mr. Zeitter, Mr. Pickett. Sitting (from left): Joyce Lewis, Secretary-Treasurer; Nellie Dunlap, President; Janice Boven, Vice President.



Comstock High School held its first basketball homecoming in 1960. Reigning over the festivities were King Gary Meints and Queen Nellie Dunlap.

Students studied American history in this grade-school classroom in the 1960s.



The impact of a General Motors plant in the Kalamazoo community began to sink in when the Kalamazoo Gazette ran this headline on Wednesday, March 18, 1964. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)

The 1960 Band Follies, this year with a Western theme, again featured the popular chorus line. From left: Mary Chrisman, Donna Braymer, Sally Heath, Ruth Kitzmiller, Lily Nametevs, Sharon Horn, Cheryl Chrisman, Joan Dunlap, Dyrinda Ryder, Luanne Moffit, Judy Forman, Sandy Hollestelle, Sandy Kerr.





## "SCENE" AROUND TOWN EARLY 1960s

*Fire Department, Post Office, West Elementary and celery fields in Comstock Township in 1960*



In June of 1960 Mrs. Theodore H. Bennink wrote a bleak commentary on the Comstock area. Originally the area was settled by Dutch immigrants who raised celery. Since the coming of "pascal" celery in California, only a small amount of celery was still being grown in Comstock. According to Bennink, the population of the greater-Kalamazoo area had exploded in all areas except Comstock. She predicted that would change with the building of Interstate 94. She said that highway would be flanked by residential-urban communities all along the lower part of Michigan from Detroit to New Buffalo.

In the 1960s, both the Gull Road District and the Green Meadow School districts were dissolved and added to the Comstock district. On September 10, 1967, the present high school was dedicated.

Seventy-five seniors from Comstock were awarded diplomas in 1961. President of Western Michigan University, Dr. James W. Miller, awarded diplomas and gave the address. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)

**KALAMAZOO GAZETTE**  
Friday, June 9, 1961. Section 2—Pages 19-36.

## Graduation Time

It's graduation time again — a time when solemnity and joy are intermingled, when eager young folks take a last lingering look backward at an educational era past and a first look, with some apprehension, forward toward new challenges and experiences.

Commencement processions, graduation speeches, end-of-the-year parties are all a part of the climactic event.

\* \* \*

**TYPICAL OF THE** graduation exercises were those staged last night for Comstock and University high schools.

At Comstock, shown in the upper photo at the right, 75 seniors were awarded diplomas and they and their parents and friends heard an address by Dr. James W. Miller, president of Western Michigan University.

The Student Center ballroom at Western Michigan University was the scene of University High's commencement program, with diplomas presented to 92 seniors (lower photo). Speakers were the valedictorian, Janet Morris, and the salutatorians, Natalie Glaser and Corinne Praus.

\* \* \*

**MORE SUCH** programs are in the offing. Portage High's seniors get their diplomas Tuesday night. Kalamazoo Christian and Loy Norrix high schools hold commencement exercises Wednesday, and Central and Parchment high graduation programs will be Thursday night.



Comstock Public Schools' Superintendent, George A. Long in 1961.

Kenneth McCartney directed this 1961 robed choir. The choir presented concerts in December and May and took part in a massed choir festival at Western Michigan University. Front row (from left): Dick Corstange, Kay Darlington, Sandra Ellard, Shellie Parker, Sharon Honeycutt, Susan Pohlman, Della Spencer, Karen DeYoung, Jake Morris. Second row (from left): Yettie Fawley, Barb Westveer, Candace Beister, Connie Auwil, Karen Coffman, Barbara McBain, Josie Born, Mary Bailey. Third row (from left): Onnaleah Pirtle, Linda Argo, Jim Hollenbeck, Bill Minor, Martin Schuiteboer, Roaslie Knapper, Victor Austin, Sharon DeFields, Jim Hostetler.



The junior high school on N. 26th



This Comstock student participates in the long jump during a 1960 field day.

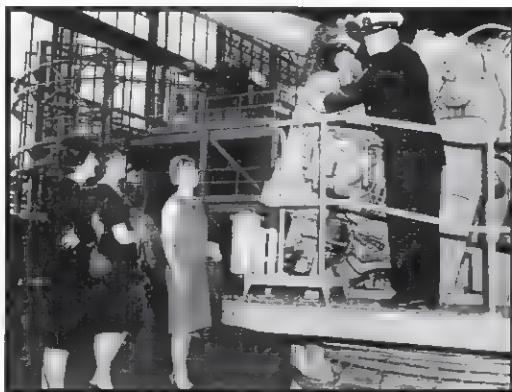


# 1960-1969



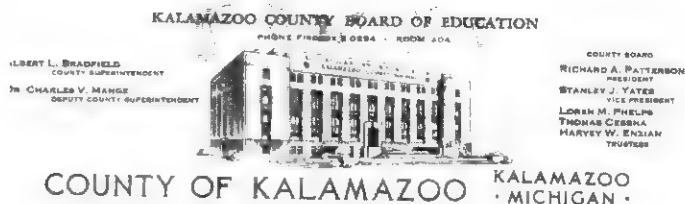
The 1961 varsity cheerleaders.

Three Comstock teachers watch as Senior Chief Gunner's Mate H.S. Sebo operates a five-inch gun mount at the Gunner's Mate School at Great Lakes in 1962.



The 1963 Comstock band, under the direction of Henry Kulesa, participated in many football halftime shows and parades.

The Kalamazoo County Board of Education gave this permission for Comstock Public Schools to consolidate the Gull Road School into its district.



July 20, 1962

TO: The Board of Education  
Comstock Public Schools, District #32  
Kalamazoo County, Michigan

FROM: Albert L. Bradfield, Executive Secretary  
Kalamazoo County Board of Education

## STATEMENT OF SCHOOL DISTRICT ASSIGNMENT by the Kalamazoo County Board of Education

The Gull Road School District #38, Kalamazoo County, Michigan, was ordered dissolved by the Kalamazoo County Board of Education on June 20, 1962 under the authority of Section 3, Chapter 1 of the School Code of 1955.

After a careful study of all factors, the Kalamazoo County Board of Education took final action on July 10, 1962 attaching the total Gull Road School District #38 Kalamazoo County, Michigan to the Comstock Public School District #32, Kalamazoo County, Michigan. Pursuant to this order, all the monies and properties, real, personal and mixed belonging to District #38, including all bank accounts, all state school aid due and to become due, and all monies owing the district from the primary school interest fund, all accounts receivable are hereby ordered distributed to the Comstock School District #32.

Further, be advised that any accounts payable to School District #38 are likewise transferred to be paid from School District #38 assets.

Further, that the obligation for outstanding bonded indebtedness of School District #38 is not transferred to the Comstock Public School District.

Further, all teachers under contract to School District #38 including non-professional personnel on contract are hereby transferred.

The Comstock Board of Education must act in capacity of an agent of the former District #38 Board of Education in annually levying an appropriate tax to pay off the principal and interest of bonded indebtedness as heretofore contracted by District #38.

Further, that tax for operation, special operation and debt of the Comstock District becomes an obligation on the property owners of former School District #38.

Further, upon completion of financial audit of school District #38, a statement releasing former School District #38's officers should be placed upon the minutes of the Comstock Board and the District #38 bonding company notified of its release from obligation.

Given this 20<sup>th</sup> day of July 1962, at Kalamazoo Michigan.

Signed *Albert L. Bradfield*  
Albert L. Bradfield, Exec. Secy.  
Kalamazoo County Board of Education

Witness *Charles V. Mange*  
Charles V. Mange  
Deputy County Superintendent of Schools

# 1960-1969



*1963 drum majorette, Gloria Upson, struts her stuff.*



*Kindergarten to third grade students at West Elementary watch a puppet show put on by sixth graders in 1963. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)*

*These students comprised the 1964 Comstock Colts girls' basketball team.*



*The 1966 senior class officers, (from left) Michael Stattler, Jenny Russon, Barbara Rosa Hansen, Roderic Krappf.*



*High School Principal Bill Brown led Comstock to excellence in education from 1962-1969.*





# 1960-1969



The 1966 groundbreaking for the new high school was a banner day. Here, (from left) Superintendent George Long, Comstock Township Supervisor Duane Burnham, Board member Ralph Zandt and Student Council President Walt Pickett look on as Board member Leon Sparks throws the first shovel of dirt.



The construction of the new high school under way in 1966.

## New High School Built on Site of Former Hale Farm

The new Comstock High School was built on the land that was once the Hale family farm. A farmhouse and a windmill sat on the land next to a horse barn and a carriage shed. According to May Hale, a granddaughter of the Ezekiel Noble Hale an early settler to Comstock, the house was a station on the underground railroad.

November - 1964

Date of Construction	CENTRAL BUILDING Present Junior-Senior High School Construction Dates	Facilities Built	Present Use
1921 Southeast Section		4 classrooms 1 library 1 art-music 1 office Boys-Girls Restrooms Boiler room	Same Jr. High Prin. Office Special Education Speech-Conference Rm. Same Storage
1925 Center Section East Section of Bldg.		4 classrooms Boys-Girls restrooms	Same Same
1929 North Section of Above		4 classrooms 1 storage room	2 classrooms 7 Admin.-office rooms Same
1936 Center Section		Boiler Room Gym-Stage (now in Jr. High)	Same Same
1941 West Section Floors 1 & 2		Wood Shop Home Ec. Chem-Physics Lab Commercial Room Library Office-Principal 12 classrooms	Home Ed. Same Same Same Custodial office Changes in 1958 building program
SOME REMODELING WAS DONE BETWEEN 1941-1958			
1958 North & South Addition 3rd Floor		Gym Vocal Music Band Cafeteria Kitchen Wood Shop Natal Shop	



Principal Bill Brown shows the floor plan of the new high school building to Comstock student council members in 1967. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)



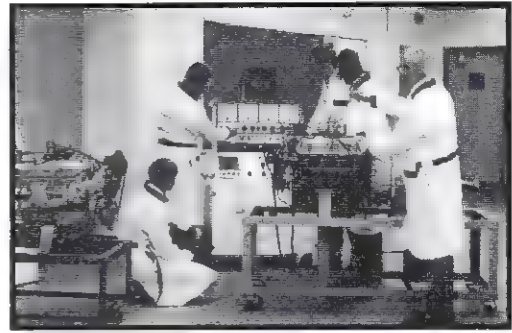
Superintendent George Long and Business Manager Louis Ruhs scope out the new high school site.

# 1960-1969



*A biology lab inside the new Comstock High School in 1967.*

*The new high school was dedicated in 1967, when Bill J. Brown was principal and George A. Long was superintendent. The building cost almost \$2 million to build*



*The automotive shop in the new Comstock High School, complete with all the latest diagnostic instruments and technology.*



*The new Comstock High School featured a large gym for athletic and social events.*



*The spacious and bright new cafeteria in the Comstock High School.*



*Students could attend lectures and classes in the lecture theatre during the day and plays in the evenings.*



*Faculty and staff could utilize these offices and conference areas in the new Comstock High School.*



# 1960-1969



*The old portion of Comstock's Gull Road Elementary School was demolished in October of 1969 after it was declared unsafe by fire and school board officials.*

*A 1966 Comstock High School graduate heads off to face the world, diploma in-hand.*



*High School students show off the long and the short of the 1969 fashion spectrum.*



*Members of the 1965-66 basketball team (clockwise) from top, John Wilbon, Mike Smith, Rod Krappf, Larry Vallier and Chuck Blades.*



*These Comstock elementary students play in a makeshift spaceship in a 1960s school assembly. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)*

# 1970-1979



*Two Fashion Board Investigators, Denise Henson and Karen Zimbleman, met every other Saturday morning at Gilmore Brothers Department Store to discuss style questions.*



*Paul S. Wollam, Superintendent, in 1970.*



*Wayne Vasher, Superintendent from 1972-76.*

*In 1973, Northeast Middle School was built.*



*Comstock Middle School's 1970 wrestling team, front row (from left): Rick Hinds, Gene Biron, Kerry Neff, John Clark. Second row: Mr. Walters, Pete Hainer, Larry Padgett, Gerald Simpson, Rock Turner. Back row: Mr. Corbus, Mr. Lawson.*



*The 1970 golf team finished its season with an 8-7 record and established the lowest team season average. Back row (from left): C. Youngs, K. Stunt, A. White, M. Moore, S. Noble, M. Dowdy, B. LaBrie, Coach Ron Dewitch. Front row: G. Dowdy, C. Nemeth, J. Glover, S. Blankenburg.*



# 1970-1979



*An Allen Drug Store ad in the 1971 Corral yearbook.*

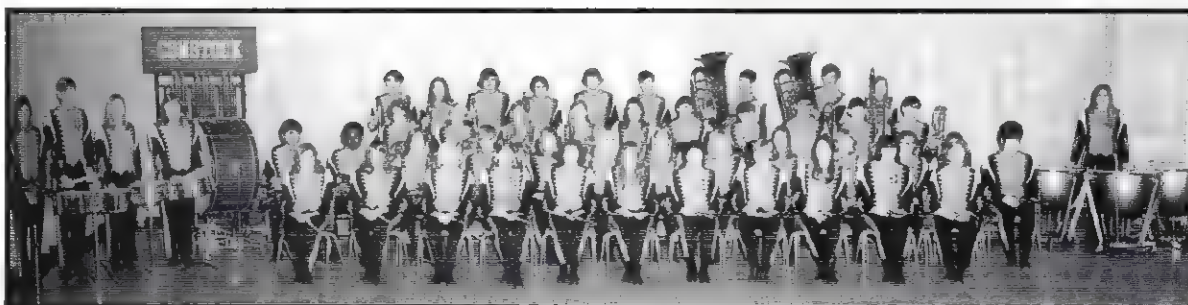
*Above, a Comstock Beer Service ad in the 1971 yearbook wishing good luck to the seniors. Below, the way the beer store looked in the early 1900s.*



*The varsity cross country team in 1971. Top row (from left): Brad Newland, Tom Terry, Doug Smith, Gary Hamlin, Gary Cole, Larry Porter. Middle row: Ron Buck, Dave Buck, Tom Ellison, Bill Christiansen, Steve Block. Bottom row: Keith Clapp, Dennis Deitz, Coach Barry Dopp, John Roth, Pat Kelly.*



*A Comstock pole vaulter goes up and over in 1971.*



*The 1971 Symphonic Wind Ensemble.*

# 1970-1979



*The 1971 Valentine Formal treated students to "This Magic Moment."*



*This couple dances the night away in 1974.*

*My, how dancing styles have changed.*



*A sophomore typing class in 1971.*



*Charter members of the VST club, Ralph Wallace, Dave Jackson and Phil Morrison.*



*The 1971 varsity basketball cheerleaders are top (from left): D. Smith, J. Page and K. Zimbelman. Bottom: S. Dodgson, C. Anderson and L. Richards.*



# 1970-1979

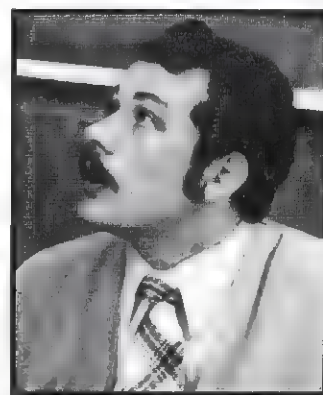


*These Comstock Central Middle School students screen print Colts pennants in a graphics arts class.*

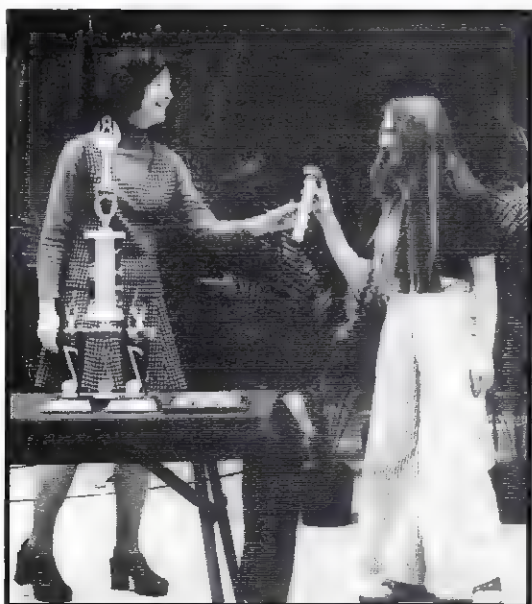


*A 1974 shot of long-time band director Hank Kulesa and friend.*

In 1979, the Alternative High School was established with about \$40,000 in federal funding. The purpose of this school was to reduce the dropout rate. The school started with about 25 students and met in the old high school. In June of the same year, the Board of Education closed West Elementary School at 5196 Comstock Avenue and leased part of the building to the Kalamazoo Academy. This building was sold in 1983 to Kalamazoo Christian Schools and became East Christian School.

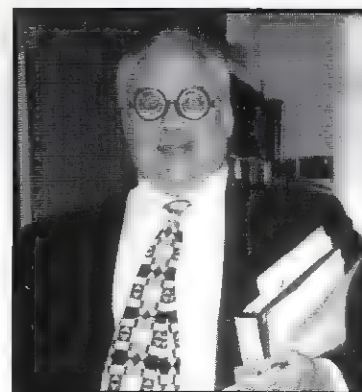


*Science teacher Tim Fox (above) looks skyward for answers in 1974, and in 1999, as Assistant Superintendent (below) is still looking, only through much thicker glasses.*



*High School Principal Howard J. Ewles in the 1970s.*

*Styles like bell bottoms and platform shoes were all the rage in 1974.*



# 1970-1979



*The food service staff in 1979 kept the cafeteria going. Pictured, front row (from left), Jeannette Rickstad, Mary Norwood, Alice Swift and Tricia Blades. Back row, Joy Kuhs, Lil Dyke, Norma Eggleston, Connie Sparks and Marilyn McDonald.*

*Julie Lierman flies over a hurdle at a 1979 track meet.*



## Public Support Leads to New Middle School

During the 1969-1970 school year, Comstock Public School administration conducted a survey to evaluate the prevailing attitudes within the school community toward the district's schools.

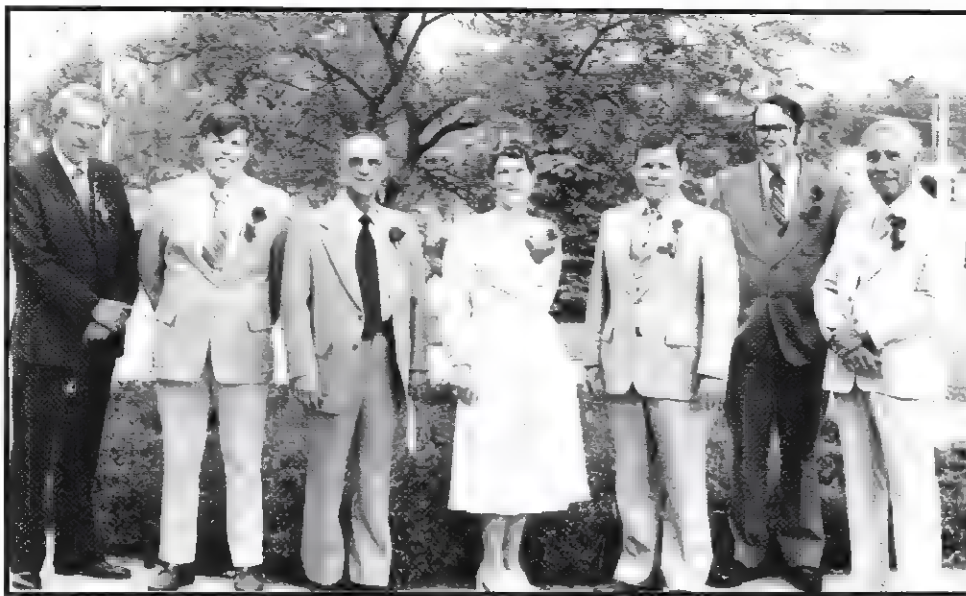
There was a high degree of interest and commitment to the Comstock Public Schools, although a majority wanted to know *more* about their schools. Of the surveys returned, 31 percent were in favor of building a totally new middle school. That public support led to the building of the school that would be Northeast Middle School.

*Central Middle School's eighth grade cheerleaders in 1973. Back row (from left): Jamie Gary, Linda Ryan and Linda Padgett. Front row: Karen Mollahan, Barb Salik, Jorene Verberg, Anne Dixon, Patsy Burnett, Stephanie Nelson, Debbie Fuller.*





# 1970-1979



*The 1979 Board of Education. From left: Mr. Kreg, Mr. Nuyen, Dr. Sidney, Mrs. Malpass, Mr. Bell, Mr. Dekoekkoeck and Mr. Wood.*



*Dr. Robert Hamet, Superintendent of Schools addresses the graduating class of 1979.*

*Members of the 1979 Comstock Colts track team (from left) Dave Deposato, Don Chapman, Kevin Mort, and Curtis Fields take to their lanes.*



*Comstock's 1970 jayvee volleyball team. Back row (from left): Debbie Riniger, Jane Meints, Molly McDonald, Marcia Wine and Coach Tina Oran. Front row: Diane Stevens, Rhonda Steele, Laurie Morrison and Chris Fox.*

## 1980-1989

On Sept. 14, 1981, the Comstock Public School District Board of Education approved the formation of a foundation. The Board's intent was to follow the concept of colleges and university foundations. It believed that alternative sources of funding for Comstock Public Schools would be needed to enhance the quality of education. The foundation was formed to benefit the educational, literary, artistic, and scientific activities of the Comstock Public Schools.

Another major event in the district's history occurred in January of 1985, when General Motors appealed the \$34.4 million assessment on its metal fabrication plant on Sprinkle Rd. in the Comstock District. In March of that year, the school district joined the Comstock Township Board in fighting GM's tax appeal. The dispute was finally settled in 1993 with the Comstock Public Schools required to repay \$4,246,211 in annual installments of \$247,657.



*In 1984, the Comstock 8th grade girls' basketball team ended a dream season with an undefeated 12-0 record in a 35-33 victory over Gull Lake. Coached by Ken Hosner, the team also raced to a 58-13 victory over Battle Creek St. Phillip.*



*The Northeast Middle School Masterpiece Writing Competition is an annual event to recognize outstanding writers. Here, the 1986 winners (from left) with Superintendent Robert Hamet are Pam Siwik, Erik Grossman, and Derek Pool.*



*These First Grade Music Makers performed songs from Ella Jenkins and Hap Palmer recordings in 1985. The students sang for the students, staff and parents.*



# 1980-1989



*These Green Meadow preschool students, in 1987, are the graduating seniors of 1999. The students are shown with teachers Ronna Teegardin and Marge Kent.*



*Beth Robbins joined Green Meadow in 1987 after teaching at East Elementary for 16 years. She taught third grade at Green Meadow and kindergarten, first, fourth and sixth grade at East. Robbins was interviewed by Jane*

*Pauley on NBC's "The Today Show" about the Young Fives program in Comstock. Robbins' mother also taught at Comstock.*

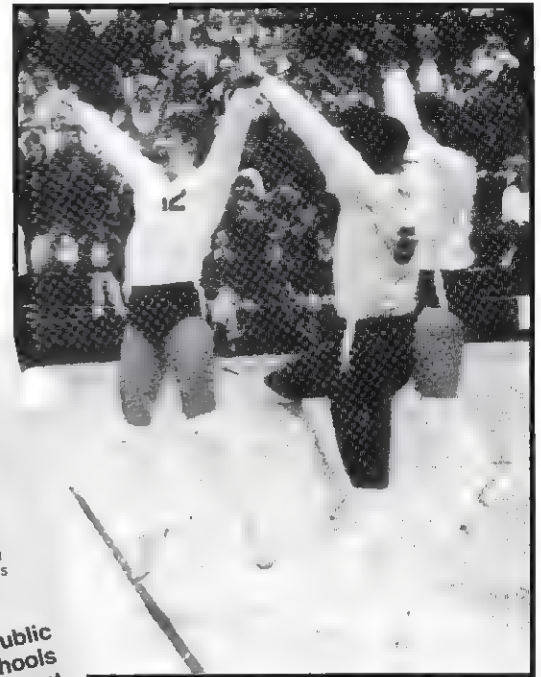
**FINGER  
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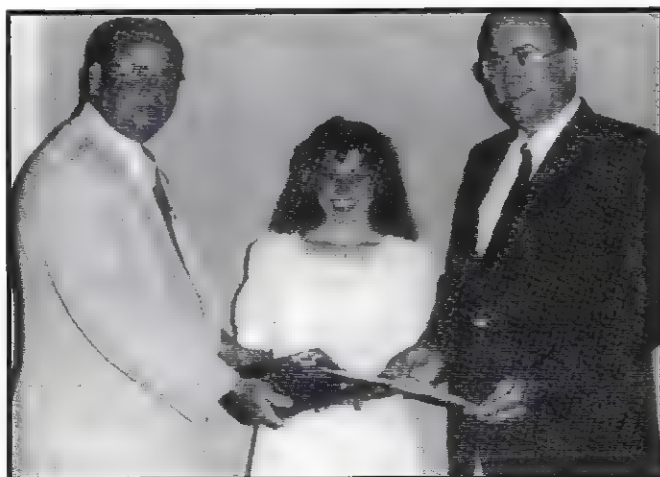
*A School District  
Dedicated to Kids*

**Comstock Public  
Schools**  
301 North 26th Street  
Comstock, MI 49041  
(616) 385-2051

**Dr. Robert Hamet**  
Superintendent

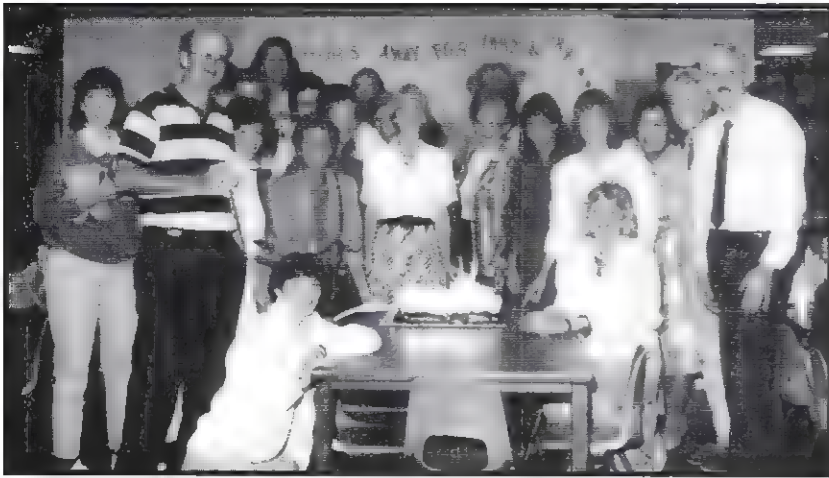


*The 1985-1986 women's volleyball team made Comstock High School history by winning the Class B State Championship. The feat was the first for any of Comstock's athletics teams. Here three team members celebrate the game-winning point after beating Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central at Delton-Kellogg High School.*

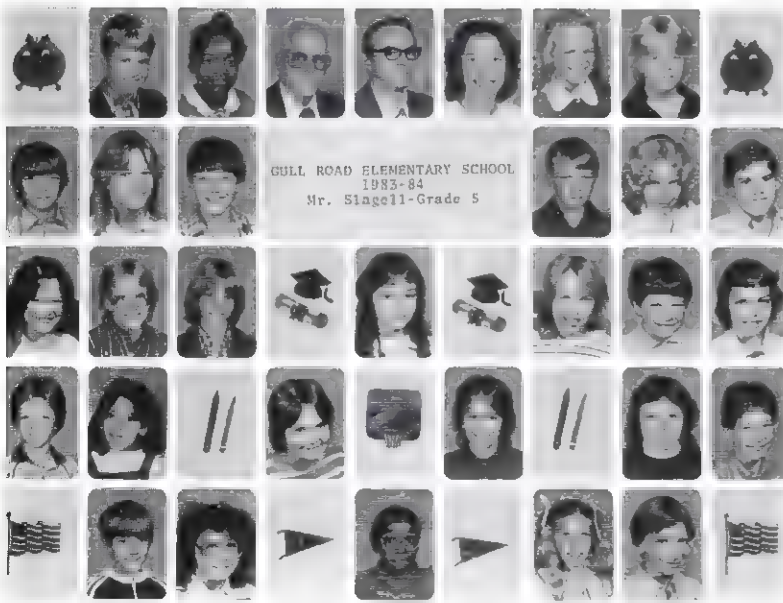


*In 1984, the school district had 30 buses, 148 teachers and 2,553 students. The district enrollment peaked in the 1976-1977 school year with 3,025 students.*

*Excellence in academics has always been a key focus at Comstock. The district honors students in many areas with awards such as the Comstock Public Schools Foundation Exemplary Student Award—first presented in 1988 to Christa Anderson (center).*



*In 1987, Green Meadow staff ushered in the new school year with a cake with 328 candles, enough to set off a fire alarm. The candles represented the 328 years the teachers and staff have collectively devoted to educating children.*



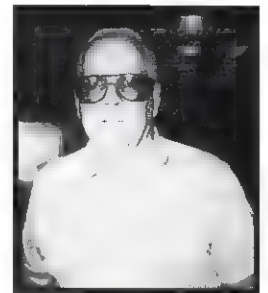
*Mr. Slagell's fifth-grade class from Gull Road Elementary in 1983-84.*

## Technology Goals a Reality at Comstock

Comstock Public Schools realized the importance of technology in education early and made a commitment to its students. In 1986, Comstock facilitated the marriage of computers with the individual needs of students and staff through well-conceived instructional plans. The district set four goals for its students:

1. The student will independently operate a computer using software to perform learning tasks;
2. The student will use the computer to enhance learning within various disciplines;
3. The student will understand the logical sequences needed to control the computer;
4. The student will recognize the various issues raised by the increased use of computer technology in our society, past, present and future.

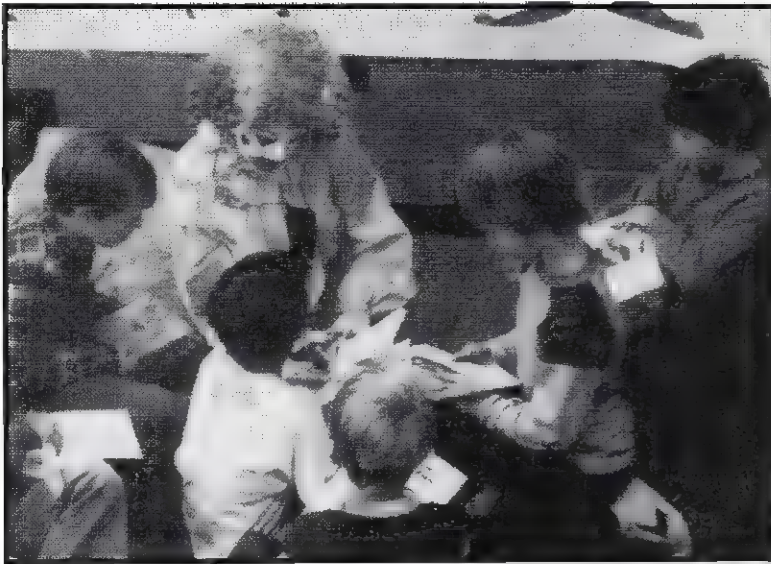
*Comstock Public Schools made a resolution of appreciation for Paul Harris' 35 years of dedicated service to the district in 1987. He was a seventh and eighth grade teacher and a principal of Gull Road Elementary School for 25 years.*



*Each year Comstock's Elementary Schools hold an Olympics of the Mind to showcase its students' skills. Shown here are the 1987 winners from East Elementary, Nathan Smeltzer, Doug Hovey, David Walls, Jason Frederick, Karen Grossman, Era Hamacher and Kenneth Kissinger.*







*In 1987, Gull Road Elementary celebrated its ninth year of Reading is Fundamental with a circus theme. Funding for the RIF books comes from the Federal Government, the Gull Road Home and School Association and the Comstock Lions Club. Here, former Gull Road student Heather Reynolds dressed up as a clown to read with Gull Road students.*

*The annual science fair is an opportunity for students, Young Fives through 12th grade, to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in various areas of science. Pictured here is Brian Folz, 1987 high school grand prize winner, receiving his award from Marlene Blank from Gull Road Elementary.*

*Folz won a cash award of \$100 from the Comstock Foundation.*



*Parents at East Elementary helped fund this new puppet stage in Miss Van Zandt's room in 1987. Tyler Boyd looks out of the stage, which is also part of a new playhouse.*



*Superintendent Robert Hamet's 1987 letter about the General Motors tax appeal.*

## From the Superintendent's Desk

### General Motors Tax Appeal Still Pending

The results of the General Motors tax appeal remains to be determined. It is anticipated the School District will know the results of the tax appeal by early in 1987.

During the 1985-86 school year, General Motors also appealed its 1986 tax assessment. Therefore, the potential liability in back taxes and interest to the School District has grown to about 2.8 million dollars or in excess of \$900,000 per year. The potential cost for an individual taxpayer with a home valued at \$50,000 would be \$300.

The potential liability amounts to approximately 30% of the total School District budget. Without question, the School District does not have the financial resources to cover the tax appeal if General Motors is successful. As a result, it is anticipated the School District would ask the electorate to vote a bond proposal that would pay the back taxes plus interest. The bond issue would work similar to a construction bond issue whereby a certain millage amount would be levied over time.

It is also likely the School District would need an additional operational millage amount to make up for the current and continual future loss in tax base. The tax base loss would be approximately 10 percent of the school District's tax base and necessitate levying as much as 4 mills, or \$100 to the owner of a \$50,000 home.

The tax appeal looms as a potential danger to the education of children in Comstock. To that end, the School District has committed up to \$250,000 to join with Comstock Township to defend against the appeal. Also, the Board of Education has also requested to intervene in the case when it is presented at the Michigan Tax Tribunal. The attorney firm of Miller, Canfield, Paddock, and Stone of Birmingham, Michigan, with its principle attorney, Mr. Sam McKim, have been employed by the Board. Mr. McKim and his colleagues bring many years of experience and high expertise to the case.

If any member of the community has additional questions or desires more information about the tax appeal, please call any Board of Education member or me.

Sincerely,

*Robert Hamet*

Robert Hamet  
Superintendent



*The Upward Bound Program is a pre-college program aimed at assisting students in grades 10-12 to develop the skills and motivation necessary for success in college. The program tries to reach students who would have little or no opportunity to go to college. Those students live on Western Michigan University's campus during the summer and participate in a variety of academic, social and cultural activities and throughout the year can receive academic support services. In 1987, Comstock students involved in the program were Robin Richardson, Yavonka Clopton, Bridget Richardson, Calvin Williams, Troy Fields, Denise Crawford, Theresa Matthews and Joe Harris.*

## Extracurricular Activities Abound

Many extracurricular activities are offered today in all of the district's buildings. For example, at the elementary level there are such activities as Science Club, School Carnival, Newspaper Club, and Spanish Club. Among the activities available at Northeast Middle School are the school newspaper, black achievement, yearbook, performing arts-drama, and student government.

At the high school, students may participate in debate, forensics, National Honor Society, the school newspaper—*The Roundup*, the yearbook—*The Corral*, as well as in a number of sports: track, golf, volleyball, softball, baseball, wrestling, basketball, football, soccer, cross country and tennis.

## Parents Raise Funds for Comstock Programs

In 1988, parents of Green Meadow students donated over \$4,000 for use with such programs as Reading is Fundamental, Tall Timbers Camp for fifth grade, Grandparent's Day and Nature Center Trips.



*Fourth- and fifth-grade students paired up with first-grade students to tutor in reading. Here, Sarah Myland (left) reads with Andrea Hutchins.*





## THREE INDUCTED INTO COACHES HALL OF FAME

Roy Walters (top), former football coach at Comstock High School, Larry Pickett (center), teacher, counselor, coach and athletic director and Pat Ashby (bottom), physical education teacher and coach, were inducted in the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame. Special guest speakers at the event included "Bo" Schembechler and Alex Agase.



*These four women are part of the fleet of bus drivers charged with the often thankless task of transporting Comstock students to school every day, even on days like the one pictured below. Neither rain, nor sleet...*



*Comstock's 1987 volleyball team completed a storybook season by winning their second consecutive Class B State Championship with a 68-7 record. Comstock, lead by coach Jeff Borr, became the first Class B team to win back-to-back state championships. The team, back row (from left), is: Joy Watts, Dawn VanDyk, Susan Jackson, Pam Siwik, Coach Borr. Front row: Connie Thomas, Pam Davan, Sherry Anderson, Becky Carlson, Kari Wallace.*



## 1990-1999



*The Comstock Community Auditorium (above) and the Comstock High School as they look on a sunny summer day in 1999.*



*Students at buildings throughout the Comstock district benefit from enhanced technology in the 1998-99 school year.*

In 1990 a \$12 million bond issue was approved for the building of new classrooms and the Comstock Community Auditorium, which opened in 1992. Also, in 1992, Northeast Middle School, which had been built on an open-school design, went back to the traditional school setting of rooms with walls and doors.

In 1998, Comstock celebrated 75 years of high school football, with the first football game having been played on Saturday, October 13, 1923. In that game, Comstock beat Schoolcraft 19-0. The 1923 team, coached by Harold Bunting, included Carl Bacon, Ray Allen, Clair Parkhurst, Larkin Noble, Bob Beveridge, Olin McQueen, Stan Mason, Reginald Beveridge, Earl Gleason, Ray Westbrook, Jacob Slager, Richard Allen, Bill Roschek, and Cliff Ballenger.

The district's curriculum is comprehensive and aligned with the Michigan Department of Education Content Standards and Benchmarks.

Leading the district in carrying out its mission statement is the Comstock School Board which has been awarded the Standard of Excellence Merit Award by the Michigan Association of School Boards. The 1998-99 school board consisted of Dave Webster, president; Gary Thomas, vice-president; Sharon Dodson, Pam Mattes, Gene Sanford, Marguerite Watson, and Robert Wheelwright. Faye Goldner serves as secretary and Nancy Swanson as treasurer.



# 1990-1999



*Mrs. Roy's third-grade class is putting both tonality and rhythm together in learning to play the recorder and to read music.*



*Comstock's tradition of volleyball excellence continued with the 1993 team winning the Class B state championship. Top row from left: Christie Perry, Nicole Frizzo, Ayanna Wilson, Jennifer Briggs, Danielle Hotrum. Bottom row: Christine Keller, Mandy Whitfield, Tracy Parker, Coach Jeff Borr, Jennifer Bell and Brandy Driver. (Photo courtesy Olan Mills.)*

Success is not so much in  
lifting yourself above others  
as in lifting others with you.



*The Arts play a large role in the educational curriculum at Comstock. Here, Green Meadow students showing masks they made in art class (from left) Jessica Parks, Amanda Dobbins, Glen Young and Amanda Haddix.*



*Members of the 1993 seventh-grade band*

## STRATEGIC PLAN GUIDES DISTRICT DIRECTION

The guiding principle for the direction of the school district is provided by the district's strategic plan. Teachers, administrators, support staff, parents, and other citizens all participate in the strategic planning, meeting yearly to review and revise, if needed, the current plan.

### The Current Plan

The current strategic plan has eight components:

1. We will develop and implement programs and services for diverse learners such as at-risk, talented, etc.
2. We will research, develop, and implement programs to enhance school-community partnerships.
3. We will develop and implement curriculum guides that are aligned with the Michigan Curriculum Frameworks..
4. We will pursue school restructuring endeavors while valuing family and community needs.
5. We will implement multicultural hiring prac-

tices, curriculum, and staff training.

6. We will identify, design, and implement programs and activities that promote positive character development and a safe school environment.
7. We will market Comstock Schools to the public.
8. We will aggressively pursue alternative solutions to financial constraints.

### The Future

With the mission statement and the strategic plan in place, Comstock is ready to move into the year 2000 and the next century.

What will that future hold? Reflecting on the district's present and

future, Superintendent Robert Hamet writes:

The Comstock Public School district is a progressive school



*The Woodwind Quintet from the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra visited the Green Meadow Music Makers in 1993. Each member told about their instrument and then played in ensemble.*

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Comstock Public School district, as a school-community partnership, is to ensure a future-oriented broad-based education and to develop caring, productive, self-directed, cooperative individuals in a safe environment through commitment to equity and excellence for all.

system. The Board of Education, staff, and administration believe the school system is responsive to students' needs. We also believe that education is a partnership. We are and will continue to be committed to working cooperatively with parents and our community to assure the best possible educational opportunities for students consistent with our mission statement.

The district emphasizes the development and implementation of a three-year strategic plan. The



plan includes belief statements that are the district's convictions, values, and character. The plan also includes strategic policies. The policies are pronouncements that establish the parameters within which the district will accomplish its mission. They are:

- We will maintain a positive, safe, orderly, learning environment.
- We will add new programs only if they clearly demonstrate mission-related needs.
- We will add new programs only when adequate resources are available.
- We will eliminate or reduce a program only after careful consideration of its relative contribution to the district mission.

## We Believe

The Board, staff, and administration believe that all children can learn and that learning is a life-long process. We also believe that high expectations stimulate high achievement and that every person has an equal right to an education consistent with personal needs and abilities. Said



*Central Office secretary Donna Wilcox works to assure our strategic goals are met into the year 2000.*

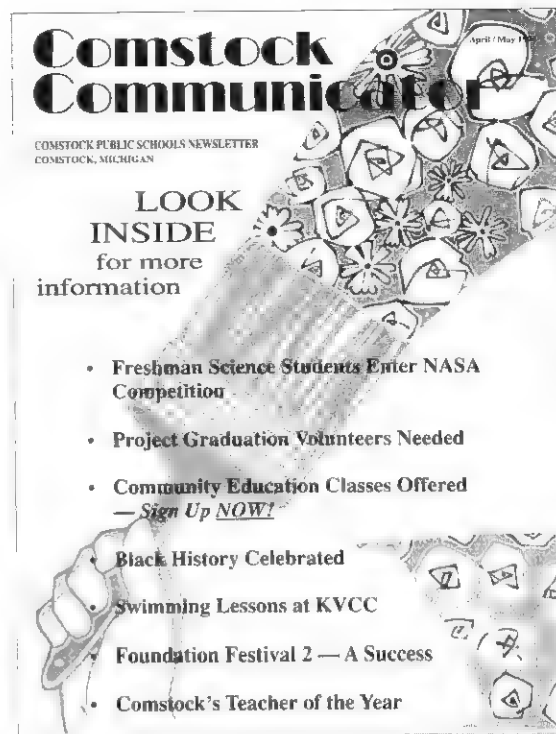
another way, the school district is committed to providing equity and excellence for all by emphasizing the development of each student's maximum potential.

As we look to the future, it is vital to continue to develop long-range visionary plans. The planning elements must include such areas as curriculum, instruction, technology, finances, personnel and facilities. However, no amount of planning for the future can foresee all of the changes, problems or needs. What the Comstock Public School District will look like in the 21st century, what changes will occur, are, to a

great extent, conjecture. However, long-range strategic planning that combines the efforts of people within and outside the district will help provide the insight and foresight needed to create our school district's future.

The Board of Education, adminis-

tration and staff need to continue to set the school district's direction based on a clear view of the past, present, and future. We need to use hindsight to help us recognize our heritage and traditions. We need to use insight to help us make the best possible educational decisions for our students. We also need to use foresight to help us establish future-oriented goals and directions. Our future as a community and as a society resides with our children and youth and a quality education is its cornerstone.



*The Comstock Communicator is a regular way for the district to communicate with its parents and other constituents about district happenings and coming events. It is published six times throughout the school year.*



*The Young Fives and Kindergarten students in Mrs. Farraye's class at Green Meadow Elementary sing quarter notes in music class. Participation in Young Fives can be an important step toward kindergarten readiness.*



*Two students pause for the camera during lunch hour at Comstock High School in 1992.*

## Breakfast Offered for Students on the Run

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day and beginning in September of 1994 Comstock Public Schools offered breakfast for all students and staff in all Comstock school buildings. The program provides food for students who miss breakfast for many reasons, including oversleeping, not having food in the house and running late.



*The 1992 Board of Education, from left, B.J. Mohberg, Dr. Robert Hamet, Brenda Kermode, Dr. Arthur Truss, Linda Lueth, Howard Ewles, Sue Fuss and Gary Thomas.*

*The Green Meadow PTA (Parents Taking Action) completed over \$8,000 worth of playground improvements in 1994. Parent crews also installed new picnic tables, planted trees and grass, built a new sandbox area and resurfaced an asphalt play area. Shown here are parents Karen Ballard and Julie Cline.*

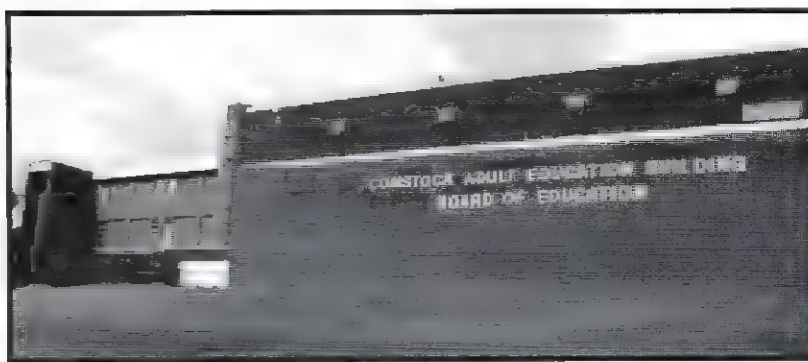




# 1990-1999



*Daniel Williams reads a "pop-up" book during 1995's March Reading Month.*



*The current administration building on N. 26th St.*

*Windy Kelemen, Comstock class of 1998, was honored in the Kalamazoo Gazette's Home-town section. Kelemen planned on attending Kalamazoo Valley Community College to pursue a degree in graphic design. (Reprinted with thanks to the Kalamazoo Gazette.)*



*East Elementary School students with Principal, Ellie Rainey at the Comstock parade in 1998.*

*Chris Crawford, the former Comstock High School all-state basketball player, is now a member of the NBA's Atlanta Hawks. He was given his old uniform in a special ceremony during a January 1999 basketball game. From left: Crawford's high school coach John Holms, Crawford and Comstock's athletic director Fred Smith.*



# 1990-1999



*Mr. Claussen's and Mrs. Schrock's students participated in swimming instruction classes at Kalamazoo Valley Community College's pool. Swimming was taught to all fourth graders.*



*Comstock Public Schools demolished the old Gull Road Elementary School building around 1970. Four portable classrooms were then built on the site to accommodate the school's students.*



*Comstock's Gull Road Elementary is home to 362 students in grades young fives to fifth.*



*Green Meadow Elementary paraprofessional Karen Ballard works with a group of students on their reading in 1998.*



*Today, Comstock's Green Meadow Elementary is home to 363 students in grades young fives to fifth.*



## 1990-1999



*Located on the east end of the Comstock School District, East Elementary boasts annual enrollment of 308 students in grades young fives to fifth.*



*North Elementary Principal Bill Bubro just keeps spinning through the years. Bubro is entering his 40th year with the district and will retire at the end of the 1999-2000 school year.*



*Comstock's North Elementary is home to 495 students in grades young fives to fifth.*

The Comstock Public School enrollment for the 1999-2000 school year is expected to be 3,052 students.

*Northeast Middle School today is home to 660 students in grades six to eight. The school opened for the 1973-74 school year.*



# 1990-1999



The 1992 soccer team boasted a winning record. Members of the team include (from left) back row: Coach Paul Burrill, Jason Blades, Matt Perry, Todd Maxson, Brad Grueter, Nathan Smeltzer, Brett Sterner and Garry Hunter. Middle row: Cindy Gibbert, Sam Andrews, Bram Spitael, Marc Poulson, Craig Peto, Randy Hunt, Joe Grueter and Eric Buytendorp. Front row: Dan McCauley, Pieter Spitael, Erik Eldred, Nicola Galuppo, Grant Carlson, Tom Auvil, Josh Cooper, Derek Pool and Mike Onderlinde.



Comstock High School Marching Band drill team members strut their stuff in 1992.

Comstock High School's top 10 percent: Amy Corstange, Erik Eldred, Jason Fox, Todd Fytczyk, Andrea Hartman, Angela Hartman, Heather Lee, Bill McGovern, Lisbeth Meninga, Phyllis Perry, Derek Pool, Sarah Ritchie, Kelly Sharp and Kristine Triestram.



Graduates of the class of 1992 bid a fond farewell.

**COMSTOCK HIGH SCHOOL  
BAND REVUE**

**KALEIDOSCOPE**

STAGE BAND  
CHORUS LINE  
SKITS  
VARSITY CHOIR  
VOCALS

**MARCH 23-24-25-26  
7:30 P.M.**

**COMSTOCK NORTHEAST MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Program cover from  
the annual Band  
Revue.

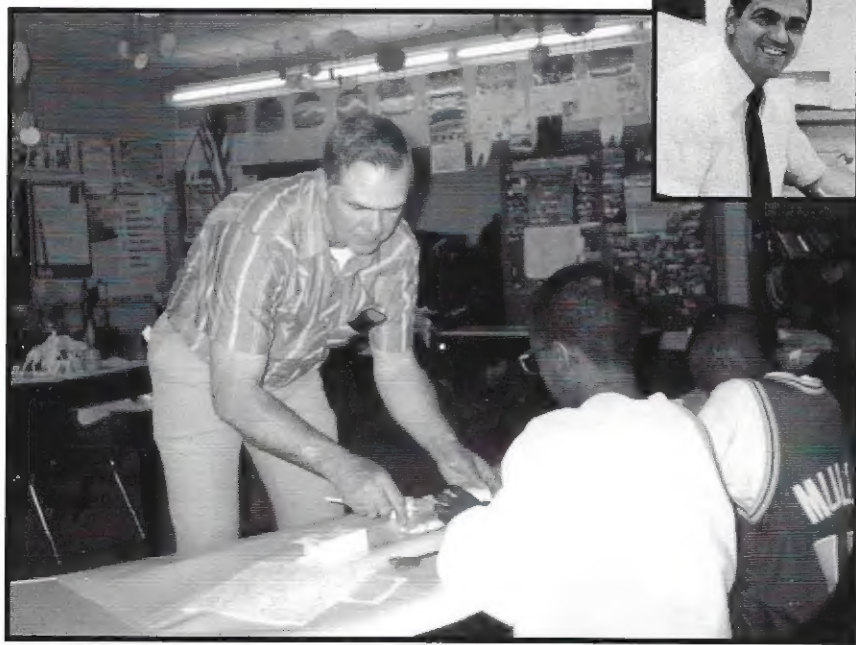


# 1990-1999



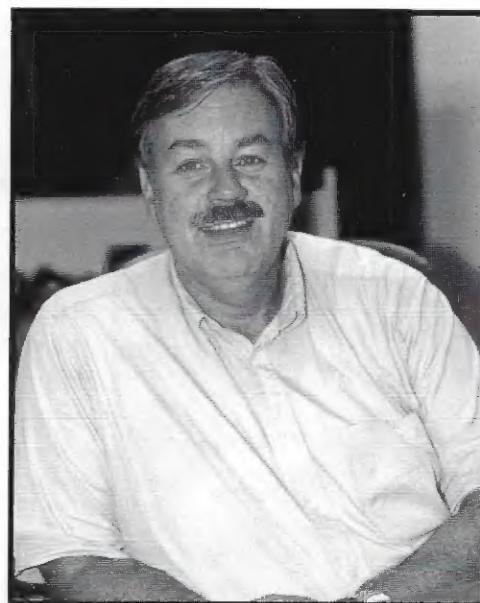
*The 1999 golf team looks forward to a big season with members (from left) back row: Coach Jay Stickle, Jason DeHollander, Corey Hinga, Andrew Backes, Arron Richards, Dale Porsch, Lauren Dart. Front row: Justin Powell, Matt Myers, Josh Cole, Brian Lewis, Andrew Dowdy, Rocky Parker. Absent: Coach John Holms.*

*1999 Comstock Board of Education. Seated: Gary Thomas, Vice Pres.; Gene Sanford, Trustee; Bill James, Trustee. Standing: Dave Webster, Trustee; Bob Wheelright, Trustee; Sharon Dodson, Pres.; Pam Mattes, Trustee.*



*Larry Lindeman, former Gull Road Elementary principal and award-winning woodcarver, instructs students on the finer points of carving in a 1995-96 class. Inset is Lindeman in a 1983 yearbook photo.*

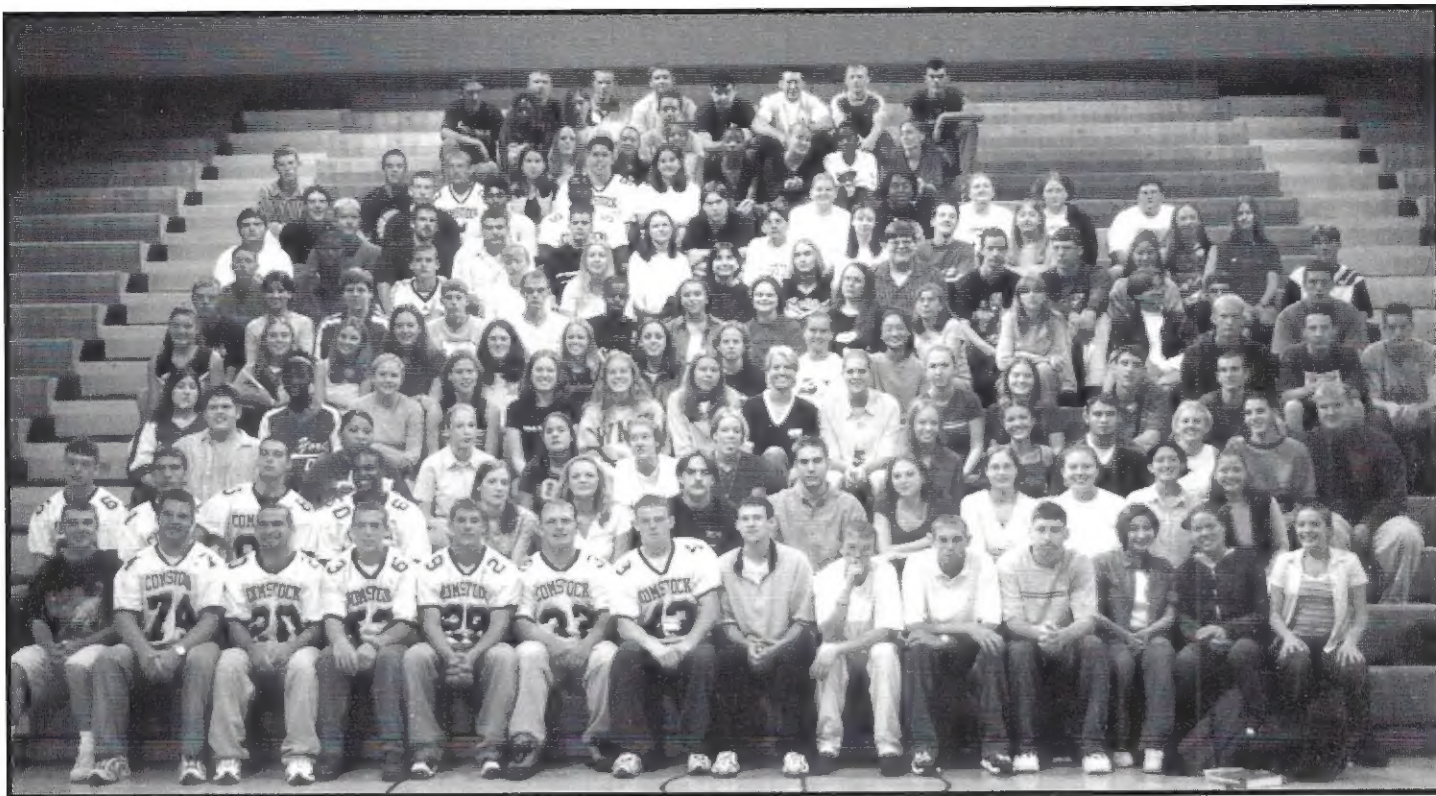
*Larry Dopp, Director of School Operations and Community Education pauses for a moment in his busy back-to-school-day to mug for the photographer.*





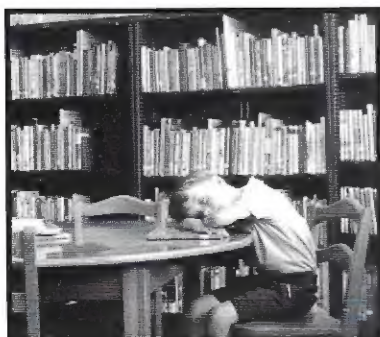
## PARTING SHOTS

### LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE...THE CLASS OF 2000



### ONE LAST LOOK BACK...

*From a quaint, peaceful village setting in the early 1900s to the 1970s modern, sophisticated look of progress. The picture on top was taken just after the turn of the century and shows the 26th St. rail road crossing. Celery crates on the extreme right await pickup at rail station. The bottom picture is a more recent view of the same crossing in 1976.*



*All tired out at the end of a long, hard day.*

